

STARS AND STRIPES.®



Kansas claims classic win over Oklahoma State

Back page

Kansas forward Wayne Simien



Actor Jamie Foxx

'Million Dollar Baby' wins big at Oscars; Foxx takes best actor for 'Ray'

Page 12



Actress Hilary Swank

Volume 63, No. 316

© SS 2005

G

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2005

50¢

Suicide bomb kills at least 115 in Iraq

Blast at Hillah clinic dubbed single deadliest attack of war Page 5



Residents look at the vehicle of the suicide bomber, which was sliced in half by the explosion as he blasted a crowd of police and national guard recruits gathered Monday outside a clinic in Hillah, Iraq. At least 115 people were killed and 132 injured in the single deadliest attack since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

AP

*Rate shown as Annual Percentage Rate, accurate as of 01/01/05 and subject to change without notice. Rates and terms determined by the overall credit worthiness of each applicant. Must be a member of SBC or eligible for membership to apply. Rates shown reflect a 25 basis point reduction for military discount and 5 basis point reduction for Internet application. Military discount and additional 25 basis point reduction for Internet application same special (example A: 7.74% APR less 25 basis points = 7.29% less an additional 25 basis points for 7.14%, example B: 6.65% APR less 25 basis points = 6.50% less an additional 25 basis points for 6.25% APR). Rates are subject to change without notice which qualify for additional funds of \$2,000 or more. Not to be combined with other special discounted offers. To receive additional 25 basis points application must be received via the Internet. Must have electronic direct deposit of pay into SBC checking account to qualify. Some restrictions may apply. See www.sbc.com for complete terms and conditions for details. **Maximum repayment term is 36 months.

RAF Hythe is not just for boats anymore

Battalion repairs and refurbishes geometers, vehicles for troops in Iraq, Afghanistan

By RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

HYTHE, England — Generators that supply power to troops in Iraq are being repaired, refurbished and repainted at a little-known Army base on England's south coast.

Members of the Combat Equipment Battalion-Hythe at RAF Hythe have added the task to their normal mission of maintaining the Army's fleet of watercraft.

"It's really totally new to us," said Sam Lawson, the project manager, during an interview with Stars and Stripes in the renovated flying boat hangar that contains his shop.

He said the first generators arrived Dec. 8 and can now be returned to Iraq. More are waiting for repair and more are in the pipeline.

"We just basically said, 'Look at all this maintenance ability we have. What else can we do for the Army?'" said Lt. Col. Martin Binder, battalion commander.

He was speaking with Stars and Stripes by telephone from Afghanistan, where he and a team from RAF Hythe are making preparations to add armor to vehicles for the Southern European Task Force from Vicenza, Italy, which will soon arrive in Afghanistan.



RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Clyde Kimber, an employee of the U.S. Army's Combat Equipment Battalion-Hythe at RAF Hythe, England, paints a repaired generator ready for shipment to Iraq for use by troops.

Chris Gill, the battalion's plans and operations officer, said the Army moved to the base near Southampton in 1967 when American forces were booted out of France by Charles de Gaulle.

"It slowly evolved from a storage base to a maintenance base," he said. "Had you come two years ago, you'd have probably found 20 to 30 boats here."

The Combat Equipment Battalion-Hythe is responsible for two far-flung locations where the Army bases watercraft. Yokohama North Dock in Japan and Kuwait Naval Base in Kuwait both have more than 30 boats, including landing craft and tugs.

When those boats need repair or renovation, the work is done at RAF Hythe, where two American

soldiers — Binder and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Cassandra Young — one American civilian and 200 British employees are on duty.

Employed at the base are welders, riggers, shipwrights, electricians and anyone else who might be handy when the job is to repair or renovate vessels capable of carrying tanks or trucks.

"We are the only watercraft re-

pair facility the Army's got," Gill said.

The battalion is part of the Army Materiel Command and is directly commanded by the Army Field Support Brigade-Europe at Seckenheim, Germany.

Other battalions maintain equipment at Bettembourg, Luxembourg, and Livorno, Italy.

There is none of the usual American support for Binder, Young and Tom Ferguson, a retired warrant officer and the civilian executive assistant. Ferguson said the nearest American facilities are at RAF Fairford, about 85 miles away.

But "mission is unique, which makes up for any hardships," he said.

"It's just one constant workload," he said. "It just keeps going and going."

The base was busy maintaining the boats, but the additional task of the generators really keeps the place hopping. Lawson said, however, no one is complaining about the new duty.

"It is important for the guys on the ground, the soldiers, to have reliable equipment," he said. "That's what it's about at the end of the day."

E-mail Ron Jensen at: jensen@mail.strips.osd.mil

NATO sub exercise set to kick off near Sicily

Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — NATO's annual anti-submarine exercise Noble Marlin kicks off Thursday in the Ionian Sea southeast of Sicily.

The exercise, known as Dogfish in previous years, will run through March 16.

Six submarines, 10 maritime patrol aircraft and 16 surface ships will take part in Noble Marlin, which the alliance is billing as "the world's largest anti-submarine warfare exercise."

The exercise will be run from Commander, Submarines Allied Naval Forces and Commander, Maritime Air, both based in Naples.

U.S. forces include aircraft from the Sigonella, Sicily-based Patrol Squadron Five and staff assigned to the two Naples-based headquarters.

Noble Marlin includes forces from 10 NATO nations, ranging from Turkey to Canada.

According to an alliance press release, the exercise is designed to keep forces proficient in coordinated anti-submarine, anti-surface and coastal surveillance operations.

Wheeler assumes command of USS Whitney

By JASON CHUDY

Stars and Stripes

GAETA, Italy — Capt. C. Ladd Wheeler relieved Capt. Christopher M. Wade as commander of the 6th Fleet flagship USS Mount Whitney during a formal ceremony Friday.

The ship had just assumed duties as the flagship during another ceremony a few hours earlier, taking over from the USS La Salle, which will be decommissioned.

The Mount Whitney arrived in its new homeport of Gaeta on Feb. 1 from Norfolk, Va., where it served as the 2nd Fleet flagship until late last year.

The Mount Whitney is one of the Navy's most unusual warships.

Its status is that of an active-duty Navy vessel, retaining its "USS" designation, but it also falls under the Military Sealift Command with a civilian crew for many of its day-to-day operations.

The civilian portion of the Whitney has an officer in charge, who is Chief Mate William McCarthy.

The Mount Whitney carries a military crew of about 170 and another 140 civilian mariners.

Though this is the first time the Mount Whitney has called Gaeta home, it's not the first time it has served as the fleet flagship. While the La Salle was in the shipyard in 1999, the Mount Whitney took over the role temporarily.

E-mail Jason Chudy at: chudy@mail.strips.osd.mil



Wheeler



USS La Salle, left, and the USS Mount Whitney in Gaeta, Italy.

JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

Determining the USS Whitney's status

The USS Mount Whitney sails in the unique role of being the only commissioned Navy ship to fall under the Military Sealift Command while still carrying the active-Navy "USS" designation.

MSC ships traditionally carry United States Naval Ship designations, while Navy ships carry the USS — United States Ship — designation.

Another Navy ship, the 3rd Fleet flagship USNS Coronado, was in a similar position. It was decommissioned from active Navy service for the second time last week and handed back to the sealift command. It had been under MSC between late 2003 and early 2004 before being recommissioned to serve

as the temporary 7th Fleet flagship in Yokosuka, Japan.

The determination to make the Mount Whitney an MSC vessel while retaining its Navy designation was based on lessons taken from the Coronado, explained Vice Adm. H.G. Ulrich III, 6th Fleet Commander.

The ship also is unusual in that it is only one of two designed from the keel up as a flagship, the other being the 7th Fleet flagship, USS Blue Ridge.

The Mount Whitney's predecessor, USS La Salle, was designed as an amphibious dock landing ship and later converted to a flagship.

— Jason Chudy

Panel clears 1st ID soldier of unlawful sex

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

WÜRZBURG, Germany — A court-martial panel Friday cleared a married 1st Infantry Division soldier of unlawful sex with a minor although he acknowledged fathering the German teenager's child.

Sgt. Harry F. Winchester III, 25, of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, had earlier pleaded guilty to a charge of adultery, according to a statement from the

Army's Heidelberg-based V Corps. But a military judge dismissed a charge of sodomy, and the panel of three officers and four enlisted soldiers — including four men and three women — found him innocent of carnal knowledge.

David Court, the soldier's civilian defense attorney, said Winchester's friend, Spc. Stephen Varney, testified that the two soldiers had met the girl outside a bar in Bad Kissingen in September 2003. Court said Varney testified

that Winchester began a sexual relationship with the girl with her parents' knowledge and that the girl said at the time she was 17.

Court said they broke up in February 2004 after the girl told Winchester she was pregnant and wouldn't get an abortion as he suggested. The soldier stayed behind while the 1-26 Infantry deployed to Iraq as rumors about the relationship surfaced among residents of the Bad Kissingen housing area, where Winchester lives with his wife. In July, he finally

joined his unit in Iraq.

The girl, who later said she was 14 at the time, gave birth to a baby girl in October, Court said, and a DNA test indicated Winchester was the father. His unit returned him to Germany in November to face charges, and he agreed to make child-support payments.

The girl testified last November at an Article 32 investigative hearing but refused to testify at last week's court-martial. So the judge, Lt. Col. Robin Hall, al-

lowed the co-prosecutors, Capt. Jonathan Larcomb and Zahid Qurashi, to read her earlier testimony to the panel.

Court and his co-counsel, Capt. Clint Campion, argued Winchester didn't know she was under 16, the age of sexual consent under military law. The panel sentenced Winchester to restriction for 60 days and hard labor for 90 days, fined him \$8,400, and ordered him reprimanded and reduced to the lowest enlisted rank.

E-mail Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.stripes.osd.mil

Preparing for Afghanistan by training in 'Braggistan'



Above: Spc. Curtis Jackson, of Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 519th Field Artillery Regiment, mans a machine gun in a convoy during the "Braggistan" training Friday at Fort Bragg, N.C. The activity is part of a training exercise at Fort Bragg, which will send more than 3,000 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan in the spring.

Right: Capt. Alan McKewan, left, a civil affairs officer, and translator Abdul M. Hussain, approach the mock Afghan village to deliver humanitarian aid during the exercise.



AP photos

Report: AF wasted \$1 million on faulty chemical detectors

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A Defense Department report says the Air Force wasted \$1 million on unreliable hand-held chemical agent detectors that could have put at risk any airmen who depended on the equipment, a local newspaper reported Sunday.

Air Force officials may have violated federal laws and military rules when they bought 100 commercial versions of the detectors and supplied them to commanders in the Middle East while knowing that the manufacturer's tests showed the detectors did not work well in hot areas or under battle conditions, the Desert Morning News reported.

Moreover, officials did not wait for other necessary tests, including some at Utah's Dugway Proving Ground, according to a Defense Department Inspector General report the newspaper obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request. The Pentagon has ordered the Air Force to stop using the 100 detectors that were purchased and to send them to military testers who are working to improve them.

The documents say the military

was developing a hand-held chemical agent detector after the first Iraq war, and British Aerospace Systems was chosen as the contractor for a "joint chemical agent detector" or JCAD. After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, that company began marketing a commercial version called the JCAD ChemSentry.

The inspector general report says Air Force Central Command overseeing the Middle East erroneously felt the commercial unit had advantages over detectors it was already using. At the command's urging, the military's JCAD Program Office bought 100 of the commercial detectors. The report says that agency knew the detectors did not meet its requirements, based on the manufacturer's own testing, but thought they worked well enough to be of use.

When a request for more units was submitted, the Pentagon said it would allow the purchase only if tests proved the JCAD was better than existing detectors.

The tests found that, among many problems, the detectors did not perform well enough in identifying when chemical agents were present, the report says.

International efforts restricting Navy's use of sonar opposed by U.S.

By MARC KAUFMAN

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration is strongly opposing international efforts to restrict the Navy's use of active sonar anywhere in the world, putting it at odds with European allies and several key ocean-protection organizations.

While allies have become increasingly concerned about research indicating a link between the mass strandings of whales and nearby naval use of sonar, the new U.S. position, being finalized last week, puts national security first.

"The U.S. strongly opposes any

international regulatory framework addressing military use of active sonar because of the potential to restrict the ability of individual States to balance the relevant security and environmental interests," the new policy reads.

The new position is described as a "consensus" agreement among government agencies, but

it touched off a contentious internal debate — one primarily between military officials who say unrestricted sonar is needed to train sailors and protect ships, and wildlife specialists who believe the sonar may be killing whales and other marine mammals with its loud bursts of sound.

While an initial Pentagon and

Navy draft was four pages long and itemized, in sometimes harsh terms, the service's views on why international sonar regulations are dangerous, the final draft is more restrained. But the major recommendation remains what the Navy initially proposed: that all efforts to limit the global use of sonar through international negotiations should be resisted.

Car bomb kills 115 outside clinic in Iraq

Attack is deadliest since 2003 invasion

BY ALI AL-FATLAU
The Associated Press

HILLAH, Iraq — A suicide car bomber blew himself up next to dozens of police and national guard recruits Monday as they lined up outside a medical clinic south of Baghdad, killing at least 115 people and wounding 132 — the single deadliest attack since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Torn limbs, feet and other body parts littered the street outside the medical clinic in Hillah, about 60 miles south of Baghdad.

Maj. Gen. Osman Ali, an Iraqi National Guard commander in Hillah, put the toll at 115 dead and 132 wounded. A health official in Babil province said the death toll could rise.

At the hospital, morgue workers unloaded plastic body bags from pickup trucks as weeping relatives looked on.

Babil province police headquarters said in an announcement that "several people" were arrested in connection with the blast. It did not elaborate.

The blast came a day after Iraq announced the capture of a key insurgent leader in neighboring Syria. It was the deadliest single attack since the insurgency began nearly two years ago.

The second deadliest attack took place

on Aug. 29, 2003, when a car bomb exploded outside a mosque in Najaf, killing more than 85 people, including Shiite leader Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim.

The attack in Hillah, with a majority Shiite population, came as the clergy-backed United Iraqi Alliance sought the support of other parties to form Iraq's first-ever democratically elected government.

Insurgents have stepped up their attacks against predominantly Shiite targets in recent weeks. A series of suicide bombings and other attacks left nearly 100 people a day over the two-day Ashoura commemoration that began on Feb. 18.

Following a funeral procession in Hillah, many of the dead will be taken to Najaf for burial.

Hillah is located just below the so-called "triangle of death," the mixed Sunni-Shiite region south of the capital that has earned the nickname owing to the frequency of insurgent bombings.

The 9:30 a.m. blast outside the medical clinic was so powerful it nearly vaporized the suicide bomber's car, leaving only its engine partially intact. The injured were piled into pickup trucks and ambulances and taken to nearby hospitals.

Outside the concrete and brick building, people gingerly walked around small lakes



People gather near a wrecked car at the scene of a suicide car bombing in Hillah, Iraq, on Monday. A suicide car bomber detonated explosives amid a crowd of people about 60 miles south of Baghdad on Monday, killing at least 115 people, police and witnesses said.

of blood that pooled on the street. Scorch marks infused with blood covered the clinic's walls and dozens of people helped pile body parts, including arms, feet and limbs, into blankets. Piles of shoes and tattered clothes were thrown into a corner.

Angry crowds gathered outside the hospital chanting "Allah Akbar," Arabic for "God is great," and demanded to know the fate of their relatives.

The director of Hillah General Hospital, Dia Mohammed, said most of the victims were recruits waiting to take physicals as part of the application process to join the Iraqi police and National Guard.

"I was lucky because I was the last person in line when the explosion took place. Suddenly there was panic and many frightened people stepped on me. I lost consciousness and the next thing I was aware of was being in the hospital," said Muhsin Hadi, 29, a recruit. One of his legs was broken in the blast.

In Baghdad, the U.S. military said Monday it was investigating the death of a U.S. soldier who was shot dead manning a traffic checkpoint in the capital a day earlier.

Another U.S. soldier was killed Monday in a vehicle accident in Beiji, 155 miles north of the capital, the military said.

AFN Open Line

AFN Line

March 2nd - Make sure you know about all the
Veteran's benefits you're entitled to!

Tune in to Power Network radio to talk to a
VA overseas representative.



Call with your questions:
DSN 389-4590 or CIV +49 (0) 621 46085-590
or email: openline@afneurope.net

Deadly attacks

A suicide car bomber blasted a crowd of police and National Guard recruits Monday outside a medical clinic in Hillah, south of Baghdad, killing 115 people and wounding 132 in the single deadliest attack in the two-year insurgency.

Here are some of the other deadly attacks in Iraq:

■ Feb. 18, 2005: Two suicide bombers attack two mosques, leaving 28 people dead.

■ Feb. 8, 2005: A suicide bomber blows himself up in the middle of a crowd of army recruits, killing 21 people.

■ Dec. 19, 2004: Car bombs tear through a Najaf funeral procession and Karbala's main bus station, killing at least 60 people and wounding more than 120 in the two Shiite holy cities.

■ Sept. 30, 2004: A series of bombs in Baghdad's al-Amel neighborhood kill 35 children and seven adults.

■ Sept. 14, 2004: A car bomb rips through a busy market near a Baghdad police headquarters where Iraqis were waiting to apply for jobs, and gunmen open fire on a van carrying police home from work in Baguiba, killing at least 59 people total and wounding at least 114.

■ July 29, 2004: A suicide car bomb devastates a busy street in Baguiba, killing 70 people.

■ April 21, 2004: Five blasts near police stations and police academy in southern city of Basra kill at least 55 people.

■ March 2, 2004: Coordinated blasts from suicide bombers, mortars and planted explosives strike Shiite Muslim shrines in Karbala and Baghdad, killing at least 181 and wounding 573.

■ Feb. 11, 2004: Suicide attacker blows up a car packed with explosives in a crowd of Iraqis waiting outside an army recruiting center in Baghdad, killing 47 people.

■ Feb. 10, 2004: Suicide bomber explodes a truckload of explosives outside a police station in Iskandariyah, killing 53 people.

■ Feb. 1, 2004: Suicide bombers kill 109 people in two Kurdish party offices in Irbil.

■ Oct. 27, 2003: Four suicide bombings target International Red Cross headquarters and four Iraqi police stations in Baghdad, killing 40 people, mostly Iraqis.

■ Aug. 29, 2003: A car bomb explodes outside mosque in Najaf, killing more than 85 people, including Shiite leader Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim. Although officials never gave a final death toll, there were suspicions that it may have been higher.

— The Associated Press

Alaska unit deploys from snow to sand

Spc. Brandon Anderson prepares an anchor plate to be secured flush to the ground as part of his unit's construction of a large area maintenance shelter along the helicopter runway at Logistics Support Area Anaconda in Balad, Iraq. Anderson is a member of the 4th Battalion, 123rd Aviation Regiment from Fort Wainwright, Alaska. The A-123rd is the first unit to deploy en masse from Fort Wainwright, located near Fairbanks, since World War II.



CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

BY CHARLIE COON
Stars and Stripes

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, IRAQ — They left the endless Alaska winter for the sunburn of an Iraqi airstrip.

The soldiers of 4th Battalion, 123rd Aviation Regiment, are currently building their workplace, a 200,000-square-foot maintenance shelter. After that, the soldiers will go about their business of tearing apart and putting together helicopters.

"We came to the desert to show them how to do aircraft maintenance," said Staff Sgt. Joel Greene, one of 115 members of Company C, part of the first large unit to deploy from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, since World War II.

For about a week the soldiers have been clearing equipment and leveling an area next to the helicopter landing zone at Logistics Support Area Anaconda in Balad. The shelter they are building will be big enough to break down a CH-47 Chinook transport helicopter and do the necessary work on its sheet metal, rotors, hydraulics and so on.

Building the shelter was a whatever-it-takes assignment. The company didn't want to wait for a contractor to be found to do the job.

"We took the book and went

through it, asked some people their experience with it, and put it up," 1st Sgt. Jason Werner said.

"So sometimes you have to work outside your box, outside your expertise," said Capt. Steven Injasoulan, a Michigan Army National Guardman borrowed from another unit down the flight line to help supervise.

The trip from Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks, halfway up Alaska's west coast, took from two to five days depending on each particular trip. The soldiers said it was 50 degrees below zero when they left Alaska.

"We had five feet [of snow] in my front yard when I left," Sgt. Travis Centi said.

Some of the battalion traveled from Alaska to New York, then to Ireland and Kuwait; others went through South Carolina and Germany.

Two of the battalion's four companies stayed in Kuwait at Camp Uday; the other two — Company C to fix helicopters and Company B to fly them — came north to Balad.

Their equipment was transported south by train to Anchorage, then by ship to Kuwait. The truckloads and ship sets that Company C needed to do its helicopter work were transported by convoy from Kuwait north into Iraq.

E-mail Charlie Coon at: coon@mail.strips.esd.mil

Handover indicates Syria may be bowing to pressure

BY SALAH NASRAWI
The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — Syria, long blamed for Muslim Brotherhood mayhem, seems to be bowing to U.S.-led international pressure to shed its image as a sponsor of regional instability.

Iraqi authorities say Syria — accused among other things of aiding anti-Israeli extremists and fanning the insurgency in Iraq — handed over Saddam Hussein's feared half brother, Sabawi Ibrahim al-Hassan.

The decision came as an apparent goodwill gesture to ease tensions with the United States, which has demanded Damascus stop hiding Mideast militants and withdraw its 15,000 soldiers from neighboring Lebanon.

The handover of al-Hassan, who No. 36 on the list of 55 most-wanted Iraqis compiled by U.S. authorities after the ouster of Saddam in April 2003, follows two recent deadly bombings in the Middle East that have escalated regional tensions and led some to point to possible Syrian involvement.

The Feb. 14 bomb that killed former Lebanese premier Rafik Hariri and 16 others in Beirut set off huge protests by Lebanese who blamed Syria and Lebanon's pro-Damascus government for the attack.

Responsibility for Friday's suicide bombing of a Tel Aviv nightclub that killed four Israelis was claimed by Islamic Jihad, a Palestinian militant group that has some officials based in Syria.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Sunday charged that Syria was behind the suicide bombing, saying Islamic Jihad carried out the bombing on orders from its leaders in that country.

Israel did not immediately threaten retaliation, but the possibility was clear, considering Israeli warplanes bombed an Islamic Jihad base in Syria in 2003 after a suicide bombing at a restaurant in Haifa that killed 19 people.

Syria has denied involvement in the Hariri and Tel Aviv bombings, but al-Hassan's handover and apparent improvements in Syrian safeguards on its long, porous border with Iraq indicate that embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad is showing signs of complying with increasing demands to support U.S. efforts to stabilize the volatile Middle East.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday, at least 1,495 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,130 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department.

The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is 15 higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Friday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,357 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 1,021 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ Two soldiers were killed Sunday in a roadside ambush southwest of Baghdad.

A Marine was killed in action Saturday in Babil province, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Spc. Jason L. Moski, 24, Blackville, S.C., and Army Pfc. Colby M. Farnan, 22, Weston, Mo.; killed Friday when an explosive detonated near their patrol in Taji, Iraq, assigned to the 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery, Fort Riley, Kan.

■ Army Spc. Adam N. Brewer, 22, Dewey, Okla.; killed Friday when an explosive detonated near his patrol in Taji, Iraq, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Hood, Texas.

5 Saddam loyalists referred to trial by special tribunal

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Five former members of Saddam Hussein's regime — including one of his half brothers — will go on trial for crimes against humanity allegedly committed in retaliation for a failed attempt to kill the former dictator, a special tribunal said Monday.

The announcement marked the first time the special court has issued referrals, similar to indictments, the final step before trials can start.

No date was given. Due to a mandatory waiting period, at least 45 days must pass from Monday's referral before a trial can begin.

The five include Barzan Ibrahim al-Hassan al-Tikriti, one of Saddam's half brothers, and former vice president Taha Yassin Ramadan. The three others were senior Baath Party members.

The five officials are facing charges of crimes against humanity for their alleged involvement in a crackdown in Dujail, 50 miles north of Baghdad, that was organized in retaliation for a failed 1982 assassination attempt against Saddam.

At least 50 Syrians allegedly executed in the Shiite town.

"The detainees of this case are also accused of other crimes still being investigated," the tribunal said in a statement.

The referrals were the first of many expected to be issued in coming weeks, including one against Saddam's notorious cousin Ali Hassan al-Majid, better known as "Chemical Ali." In December, investigative judges summoned al-Majid for closed-door preliminary hearings for his



Abdulhadi Kadam Rowed al-Musheikhi, a local Baath official in the Iraqi north, arrives Monday at the Court of Investigation in this photo released by the Iraqi Special Tribunal.

role in poison gas attacks against Iraq's Kurdish minority.

The three others on trial were identified as Awad Hamad al-Bander Al-Sadun, a former chief judge of the Revolutionary Court, Abdulhadi Kadam Rowed al-Musheikhi, and his son, Mizher Rowed al-Musheikhi. The latter two were local Baath officials in Dujail.

Photos from the Front

Presented by Stars and Stripes Advertising & AIG Europe



ABOVE 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division soldiers confirm locations of buildings to be searched in Mufrek, Iraq during Operation Centaur Showdown on Feb. 8. The operation was conducted with Iraqi policemen and soldiers working alongside each other searching for unregistered weapons and illegal bomb-making materials.

Sgt. Matthew Acosta, U.S. Army

BELOW An ex-police officer shows Sgt. Fasaaga B. Ena his expired police identification.

Duane Brown, U.S. Army



RIGHT Iraqis load election ballots onto a truck heading to Iraqi polling sites Jan. 29 in Kirkuk, Iraq. About 583,000 Iraqis were registered to vote in the Kirkuk province for Iraq's first democratic elections on Jan. 30.

Sgt. Sean Kimmons, U.S. Army

BELOW RIGHT Staff Sgt. Luis Parra with Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry spreads out a weapons cache found by Iraqi police during a traffic control point Jan. 28 in Kirkuk, Iraq.

Sean Kimmons, U.S. Army



SECURITY & PROTECTION

Important to our Country... Important to you and your Family

Our Protection Packages • Automobile Insurance • Household Goods • Personal Liability • Pet Insurance
Single Service Member's Personal Property Coverage • Vehicle & Driver Legal Protection

Please call AIG in Germany at 069-97113-0

or visit us on the web: www.aigeuropa.com/military-auto



American International Group • American International Underwriters

A U I P'orday l eSmi g des le S re w "



IN THE WORLD

Vatican says pope's condition improving

BY VICTOR L. SIMPSON

The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II has started trying to improve his breathing and speaking, and he is eating regularly and spending some time in an armchair, the Vatican said Monday.

The Holy See gave no hint of when the 84-year-old pope would leave Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic, an indication that doctors see the need for an extended stay.

"The Holy Father's postoperative phase is taking place without complications. His general condition and biological parameters continue to be good," the Vatican communiqué said. "The Holy Father is eating regularly, spends some hours in an armchair and has begun exercises to rehabilitate breathing and phonation."

The therapy is aimed at improving the pope's breathing and ability to speak after last week's surgery to insert a tube in his throat to ease his second respiratory crisis in less than a month.

One day after the pope surprised the faithful with a brief ap-

pearance in a hospital window, the Vatican handed out the brief medical update to reporters, and papal spokesman Joaquín Navarro-Valls was not present to offer any elaboration. It said it would not issue another update until Thursday.

Marco Verzaschi, a regional health commissioner, visited the hospital Monday and met with the pope's medical team, including papal physician Dr. Rodolfo Proietti.

"I'm much more optimistic now, after having spoken to the doctors, than when I came," Verzaschi said. "With the pope's great stamina and strength, he is overcoming even this very difficult trial."

The pope spent 10 days in the hospital last month with breathing problems that stemmed from the flu. His release led some to question whether he had been released too soon.

"Please, let's not let him get out of the hospital too quickly," said Vatican-based Mexican Cardinal Javier Lozano José Barragán, quoted by La Repubblica newspaper.

John Paul's views clear on illnesses

BY BRIAN MURPHY

The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — During a trip to Austria nearly seven years ago, Pope John Paul II shuffled slowly through a center for the chronically ill. He leaned heavily on his cane as he spoke to the staff.

"Even in the frailty of the last hour," the pontiff said at the Renweg Hospice in Vienna, "human life is never meaningless or useless."

His address in June of 1998 went largely unnoticed.

But now — with the 84-year-old pontiff confined to a hospital room and facing post-surgery speech therapy — his past encyclicals, letters and messages on the sick and suffering resonate with new meaning.

They offer possible insights into how the pontiff is approach-

ing his current trials and what he considers morally appropriate if his condition deteriorates.

But by lowering his 26-year papacy, John Paul has built a rich body of reference about the final stages of life. Its pillars include categorical rejection of euthanasia, insistence on treatments that help people bear ailments with dignity and encouragement of research to "enhance and prolong human life."

But some gray areas remain. There's room in the pope's view to refuse some forms of aggressive medical intervention for terminally ill patients and avoid painkillers that induce unconsciousness.

Some of the pope's most comprehensive statements on sickness and mortality came in a 1985 address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, an advisory body of researchers and schol-

ars that helps shape papal pronouncements. The pontiff interwove fresh comments with references to an important 1980 declaration by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, the Vatican's theological guardians.

The pope said it was acceptable, when death was imminent, to halt "forms of treatment that would only secure a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life." The pope has not given specific examples, but it's thought to include such measures as experimental transplants and continuing chemotherapy against terminal cancer.

The pope noted, however, that "normal care" such as feeding and hydration can never be stopped.

"Even when the sick are incurable, they are never untreatable," the pope said 20 years ago. "Whatever their condition, appropriate care should be provided for them."



Protesters wave Lebanese flags Monday in Beirut, Lebanon. About 25,000 people defied a protest ban and demonstrated, calling for Syria to withdraw its army from Lebanon.

Lebanon's pro-Syrian government resigns

BY BASSEM MROUE

The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Drawing enormous cheers from 25,000 demonstrators, Lebanese Prime Minister Omar Karami resigned Monday, two weeks after the assassination of his predecessor triggered huge protests and calls for Syria to withdraw thousands of troops.

President Emile Lahoud — a jubilant opposition's newest target — quickly accepted the resignation and asked Karami to continue in caretaker capacity, a presidential statement said.

The resignation was a huge victory for the opposition and the most dramatic moment yet in the series of protests and political maneuvers that have shaken Lebanon and its Syrian-backed government since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

"I am keen that the govern-

ment will not be a burden in front of those who want the good for this country. I declare the resignation of the government that I had the honor to head. May God preserve Lebanon," Karami said in remarks heard through loudspeakers by cheering throngs.

In the United States, the White House praised the resignation, saying it opens the door for new elections there that are "free of all foreign interference" from neighboring Syria.

In Beirut, opponents drove around the city, honking in joy. While Karami's Cabinet continues as a caretaker government, the president consults with parliament then appoints a new prime minister. That person consults parliamentary blocs to form a Cabinet, which must withstand a parliamentary vote of confidence.

"Today the government fell. Tomorrow, it's the one huddled in Anjar," opposition leader Elias Attallah told the crowd to cheers.

Would-be bomber admits guilt

BY ROBERT BARR

The Associated Press

LONDON — A British man accused of conspiring with shoe-bomber Richard Reid pleaded guilty Monday to conspiring to blow up a U.S.-bound aircraft in 2001, becoming the first person to be convicted of a terrorist offense in Britain since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

Sajid Badat, 25, from Gloucester, England, was charged with conspiring with Reid, who was convicted in the United States, and with a Belgian to make the explosive device.

"It is clear the plan was that Reid and Badat would bring down a passenger aircraft at similar times in late December that year," prosecutor Richard Horwell said.

Badat pleaded guilty to conspiring between January 1, 1999, and November 28, 2003, to place a device on an aircraft in service.

Prosecutors said there was evidence that Badat had lost his nerve and withdrew from the plot.

Reid was arrested after trying to detonate the device aboard an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami on Dec. 22, 2001. He was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to charges in

Britain may allow house arrest without a trial

The Associated Press

LONDON — Controversial proposals for a new anti-terrorism law, which would allow Britain to place suspects under house arrest without the need for a trial, faced more debate in Parliament on Monday.

Prime Minister Tony Blair's government wants new powers to electronically tag British citizens and foreign nationals, or place them under house arrest based on secret intelligence. Under the proposed law, a government minister, acting on the advice of Britain's spy agencies, would also have the power to impose curfews, travel bans and bars on using telephones and the Internet.

Blair has defended the plan as "absolutely necessary" in protecting Britain from terrorism. But opposition parties and civil rights campaigners say such unprecedented powers would erode Britain's centuries-old judicial process and the right to a fair trial.

"I very much hope it is going to be possible to reach a compromise on this," said Michael Howard, leader of the main opposition Conservative Party.

"It is something which we ought to deal with by way of consensus. I have what that clear from the word go," Howard told BBC radio on Monday.

the United States.

According to that indictment, Badat "admitted that he was asked to conduct a shoe bombing like Reid" when he was arrested in Britain last November. Bomb components similar to Reid's were found at his home, the indictment said.

Inayat Bunglawala, spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain, warned Badat could expect no sympathy from British Muslims "because he has pleaded guilty to involvement in a terror plot targeting innocents."

"If it had succeeded, this would have been a ghastly crime."

Demonstrators killed in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Haitian police fired at supporters of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on Monday, marking the one-year anniversary of a rebellion that ousted the democratically elected leader. At least two people were killed.

Protesters changed a police roadblock in Bel Air, a stronghold for Aristide militants where the anniversary protest began. The police fired tear gas, then bullets.

People with eyes streaming from tear gas ran off with one body and U.N. peacekeepers surrounded the second, which lay in a pool of blood. About a dozen were wounded.

Earlier, the crowd of some 2,000 had shouted slogans against President Bush, whom Aristide blames for his ouster on Feb. 29, U.S. officials deny the claim.

"George Bush is the biggest terrorist!" the crowd yelled before shots rang out.

From The Associated Press

Current regime easily ahead in Tajikistan vote

But some claim election fraud

BY BAGILA BUKHARBAEVA
The Associated Press

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan — The party of strongman President Emomali Rakhmonov appeared headed for an easy victory Monday amid allegations of vote-rigging and other breaches during weekend parliamentary elections in the former Soviet republic.

The Central Election Commission said Rakhmonov's National Democratic Party had won about 80 percent of the vote, but it didn't specify what percentage of the ballots were counted.

All four opposition and one pro-government party accused authorities of intimidating voters, allowing multiple voting and ballot-box stuffing. They demanded that the results be reviewed and officials responsible for violations be punished.

"It was complete falsification,"

said opposition Islamic Renaissance Party leader Muhiddin Kabiri.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which sent about 150 observers, said the elections were disappointing, saying authorities largely controlled the campaign and accusing officials of interfering with independent media.

Sunday's election pitted a fledgling opposition against the party of Rakhmonov, whom critics accuse of stifling dissent. They say his recent steps — such as a referendum in 2003 giving him the right to seek re-election

until 2020 — threaten the country's stability and hopes for democracy.

Six parties contested 63 seats in Parliament's lower house, with 41 lawmakers being chosen directly. The other 22 seats will be divided among parties garnering at least 5 percent.



An elderly ethnic Russian woman holds a poster Monday reading "We want to know the truth about election" as several people rally in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek.

Observers criticize Kyrgyzstan election

The Associated Press

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan — Kyrgyzstan's parliamentary elections fell short of international standards, though the balloting was more competitive than in past votes, a joint election monitoring delegation said Monday.

The poll was "undermined by vote buying, de-registration of candidates, interference with media and a worryingly low confidence in judicial and electoral institutions on the part of voters and

candidates," said Kimmo Kiljunen, head of the observers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The observers, who also included European Parliament representatives, called on Kyrgyz authorities to improve their performance in the second round of elections, expected in two weeks, including ending the practice of canceling candidates' registration, and refraining from accusing the opposition of extremism.

Conference to tackle Palestinian reforms

The Associated Press

LONDON — The international community will pledge political and financial support for the Palestinian Authority at a global conference in London on Tuesday, in return for reforms of a government



Abbas

riddled with corruption under Yasser Arafat. The meeting is not the major international peace gathering that Arafat's successor as Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, had hoped for, despite the attendance of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and a host of European and Arab foreign

ministers. Israel, importantly, is not represented.

But British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said it was a "vital practical step" toward the moribund 2003 road map peace blueprint, which envisages the establishment of a Palestinian state and a series of steps including the end of fighting and of Jewish settlement activity.

"I think that with luck tomorrow, the conference will bring a renewed focus on the road map. People want to look forward, not back," he said.

The conference reflects the improved atmosphere in Israeli-Palestinian affairs since Arafat's death.



Rice

EU criticizes Russia's lack of reform

The Associated Press

LUXEMBOURG — The European Union pressed Russia Monday over concerns Moscow is not working hard enough for democratic reforms that the EU views as crucial to generating economic growth and investments.

EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and EU security affairs chief Javier Solana met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov for talks to further a broad cooperation agreement.

"To reap the full potential of our relationship, I hope we will make substantial progress" in four key areas, Ferrero-Waldner said ahead of the meeting with Lavrov in Luxembourg, which currently holds the EU's rotating presidency.

The four areas cover economic issues, justice, external security and cultural affairs, including research and education. The EU and Russian President Vladimir Putin hope to sign an overall partnership accord May 10 in Moscow.

Ferrero-Waldner spoke of "an ambitious agenda" not just to increase economic cooperation, but also to boost "efforts together to build security for our citizens and in our immediate neighborhood and forge new links in education and research."

The EU's attempts to improve relations with Russia often have involved struggle.

Fishing boats part of tsunami aid

BRUSSELS, Belgium — European Union nations on Monday agreed to send small fishing boats taken out of commission in the 25 member nations to tsunami-hit areas of Asia to help relaunch the fishing industry there.

EU fisheries ministers unanimously decided to send vessels between five and 20 years old and under 39 feet long which are being taken out of the EU fleet in an attempt to limit overfishing, said an EU official, who asked not to be identified.

More spending for poor nations

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The European Union's development aid chief said Monday he is preparing plans to make sure the 25 member states increase spending for poor countries.

Louis Michel is currently on a tour to prod EU capitals to ensure the bloc meets its international commitments to get aid spending up to 0.7 percent of gross national income by 2015.

From The Associated Press

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE!

Pentagon Car Sales

is proud to salute the men and women of the US Armed Forces serving in Iraq. Our thoughts and prayers are with you for a safe return to home and family.

May God bless you and the United States of America.

We would like to show our support by sponsoring free Stars & Stripes newspapers for Operation Iraqi Freedom service members staying at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and the Edelweiss Hotel, Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

www.PentagonCarSales.com

Pentagon Car Sales

Drive Safe Your Dream

Sales@PentagonCarSales.com

Watchdog agency focuses on Iran nukes

U.N. agency says Tehran received 'extensive' black-market research

BY GEORGE JAHN
The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Iran received "extensive" written information from the nuclear black market in the 1980s, the head of the U.N. atomic watchdog agency said Monday, reacting to reports that the list contained all the know-how required for weapons-related enrichment technology.

Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was reacting to revelations by diplomats that Tehran had been approached by members of the nuclear black market network in the late 1980s with a written offer to set up the basics of the enrichment program.

Tehran has said it wants to use uranium enrichment for the peaceful purpose of power generation, but the practice can also be used to make weapons.

A two-year agency investigation already had established that Iran ran a clandestine nuclear program for nearly two decades.

Revealing details to The Associated Press during the weekend, the diplomats, requesting anonymity, said the new revelations indicated Iran had been offered full enrichment know-how earlier than previously believed. The diplomats said that, in cooperating with an IAEA investigation, Iran had turned over to the agency the initial written information from the network and had claimed to have refused offers of technology specifically geared toward making nuclear weapons.

"They indicated that they did not take these people up on the entirety of the offer," ElBaradei said, alluding to the Iranian claim, adding, however, that the agency still had to "make sure that they only got out of this."

In giving the agency the writ-

ten offer from the network of Pakistani scientist A. Q. Khan, Iran "showed us for the first time the offer they had, and that is good," ElBaradei said.

Despite its focus on the two countries, the board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency is unlikely to take concrete action either on Iran or North Korea. The main attempt to deal with Iran has moved to another forum, with France, Germany and Britain working to have Tehran commit to scrapping uranium enrichment, while the agency has no leverage at all in the case of North Korea, which quit the IAEA two years ago.

Still, with the two nations considered the greatest nuclear threats, much of the meeting will deal with ways of defusing concerns. North Korea, which last month announced that it had nuclear weapons, will be urged to return to six-nation talks meant to defuse the threat, said diplomats accredited to the agency on the eve of Monday's opening session.

The diplomats also told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity that Iran would be the target of oblique criticism in the board's closed-door meetings, with senior agency officials citing some lack of cooperation with IAEA officials.

Among the problems to be discussed are delays by Tehran in informing the agency that it was building tunnels in the central city of Isfahan to house parts of its suspended uranium enrichment program, the diplomats said.

Mention also would be made of maintenance work on centrifuge parts and pipes by Iran that possibly violated the spirit of an agreement with the three European powers to totally freeze its enrichment program while negotiations were still ongoing. The Europeans hope to persuade Iran to scrap enrichment permanently.

Interpol meeting to focus on bioerrorism

The Associated Press

PARIS — Anthrax, sarin and threats of other bioterrorism attacks will be the focus of an Interpol conference starting Tuesday in France with police chiefs, counterterrorism experts and health officials from around the world.

More than 400 officials from 120 countries will meet in the city of Lyon, where Interpol is based, for what the global police agency calls its first conference devoted to bioterrorism — a looming threat that experts fear much of the world is ill-equipped to handle.

The risk of bioterror attacks will be the main topic of discussion, along with how to better prevent

and prepare for threats and training police to handle attacks, Interpol said in a statement.

Police will examine past attacks, including the anthrax scare that shook the United States after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks and the 1995 sarin attacks in the Tokyo subway.

Senior officials were expected from the New York Police Department, the U.S. Postal Service, London's Metropolitan Police and from around the world, including Canada, Malaysia, Singapore and South Africa.

The conference comes as part of a two-year Interpol program to train police and experts to fight bioterrorism.



Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and chairwoman Ingrid Noll from Canada wait for the start of the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors' meeting on Monday at Vienna's International Center.

AP

U.S. weighs incentives for Iran

WASHINGTON — In a potential strategy shift, the Bush administration is considering joining Europe in offering Iran economic incentives in exchange for abandoning its nuclear fuel program, the White House said Monday.

In the past, the administration had opposed any rewards for Tehran's cooperation. But President Bush is rethinking the issue after his trip last week to Europe, suggested White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

Meantime, a British official said Monday that Britain, France and Germany have discussed supplying Iran with commercial aircraft and aircraft spare parts as incentives, in addition to membership in the World Trade Organization.

Russia dismisses reactor fears

MOSCOW — Russia's nuclear chief said his country felt obligated as a nuclear power to help Iran build its first nuclear reactor and dismissed concerns that the Bushehr atomic energy plant could be used to develop a weapons program.

Russian Atomic Energy Minister Alexander Rumyantsev also denied earlier reports that he had quoted him as saying that Russia would start pro-

viding southern Iran's Bushehr reactor with nuclear fuel six months before the plant is commissioned late next year.

Russia would supply the fuel, he said, but that time frame was not accurate.

"The fuel will appear at the station when it will be needed there," Rumyantsev said, without elaborating.

North Korea may return to talks

TOKYO — North Korea has told South Korea it wants to return to nuclear disarmament talks in June and strike a bilateral pact with the United States later this year, a Japanese newspaper reported Monday.

The conservative national Sankei newspaper said North Korea was eager to calm South Korean jitters following Pyongyang's announcement Feb. 10 that it possesses nuclear weapons and would boycott six-nation talks aimed at persuading it to give up its nuclear ambitions.

Since that announcement, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il told a visiting Chinese envoy that his government would rejoin the talks if certain conditions are met and the United States drop its "hostile policy" toward the communist nation.

From The Associated Press



STARS & STRIPES
Your Hometown Newspaper



FREE



Classifieds

Stars and Stripes is offering Free Classifieds to private party customers beginning March 1.
Ads may be submitted via post, fax, email, or in person.

Fax: Germany 06155-601-376; Outside Germany +49 6155-601-376; DSN 349-8376
Email: freecads@mail.estripes.osd.mil
Mail to: European Stars and Stripes Attn: Classified Dept. Unit 29480 APO AE 09211

IN THE STATES

Suspect. BTK serial killer suspect confesses

BY ROXANA HEGEMAN
The Associated Press

WICHITA, Kan. — Police say they are confident that the arrest of a man suspected of being the so-called BTK serial killer will end 30 years of terror, and a source said he confessed to some killings.

Dennis L. Rader, the churchgoing family man arrested Friday, confessed to six killings, the source close to the investigation told The Associated Press on Sunday.

"The guy is telling us about the murders," the source said on the condition of anonymity.

Rader, 59, was being held in lieu of \$10 million bail in the deaths of 10 people between 1974 and 1991. Police had long linked BTK — the killer's self-coined nickname that stands for "Bind, Torture, Kill" — to eight murders but added two more on Saturday after Rader's arrest and said their investigation was continuing.

Rader could appear in court via video as early as Monday so prosecutors could recite yet-to-be-filed criminal charges against him and the judge could review bail. However, the hearing was likely to be postponed until Tuesday, the district attorney's office said Sunday. It was unclear whether Rader had a lawyer.

The source said investigators also were

looking at three other killings as linked to the BTK killer. But Police Chief Norman Williams on Monday angrily criticized news media reports as complicating "an already complex investigation."

Williams did not go into specifics and refused to take any questions.

Prosecutors had said initially they could not pursue the death penalty against Rader because the 10 murders linked to BTK happened when Kansas did not have the death penalty. Kansas restored the death penalty in 1994.

Rader, a married father of two, a Cub Scout leader and an active member of a Lutheran church, was anything but a recluse.

His job as a city code enforcement supervisor required daily contact with the public, and he even appeared on television in 2001 in his tan city uniform for a story on vicious dogs running loose in Park City.

Before becoming a municipal employee, Rader worked for a home-security company, where he held several positions that allowed him access to customers' homes, including a role as installation manager. He worked for ADT Security Systems from 1974 to 1989 — the same time as a majority of the BTK killings.

At Christ Lutheran Church, where Rader was president of the church council, pastor Michael Clark said Rader's wife, Paula, was in a state of shock.

"Her demeanor and voice indicated she was suffering," Clark said.

Associated Press writer David Twidley contributed to this report from Wichita.



Gerald Mansholt, bishop of Central State Synod of the Episcopal National Church, is interviewed Sunday following a service at Christ Lutheran Church in Wichita, Kan. Dennis Rader, a suspect in the BTK killings, is a member of the church.

Court will hear case on civil suit jurisdiction

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court said Monday it will use a renters' lawsuit claiming personal injury from toxic mold in apartments to clarify when plaintiffs can sue in federal or state court.

The question is a hot political topic, since consumers often pursue claims in state courts, where large payouts in class-action lawsuits tend to be made. Earlier this month, President Bush signed legislation aimed at steering big-money lawsuits to federal courts.

Under federal rules, a plaintiff has a right to "remove" a case from state to federal court when the two parties are citizens of different states and the claimed damages exceed \$75,000.

At issue is whether Virginia renters Christopher and Juanita Roche can sue their landlord, Lincoln Property Co., in Virginia state court over exposure to toxic mold in their apartment. The Texas-based company has a subsidiary in Virginia.

Monday's Supreme Court highlights

■ Heard arguments on whether foreign cruise lines sailing in U.S. waters must comply with a federal disabilities law requiring better access for passengers in wheelchair.

■ Agreed to consider whether states may tax motor fuel that is sold on Indian reservations in a case involving the Prairie Band Potawatomi tribe in Kansas.

■ Said it will consider whether a whistleblower prosecutor may sue his former employers for retaliation after he reported possible wrongdoing by the sheriff's office.

■ Agreed to review whether a federal appeals court may examine the sufficiency of evidence in a civil jury case when a party failed to move for a new trial. The case involves packaged food company Unifarm Food Systems in its patent suit against Swift-Eckrich, also known as ConAgra, for a method of browning precooked meat.

■ Declined to hear the appeal of Panos Tsolainis, the former Louisiana shipping executive serving a life sentence for running over his ex-wife with a car.

■ Asked for the U.S. solicitor general's views in a case challenging a multimillion dollar award against North Carolina-based Laboratory Corp. of America for patent infringement involving a test that helps predict strokes, heart attacks and dementia.

— The Associated Press

Bush to governors: Lets work out Medicaid problem

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush told the nation's governors on Monday that he recognizes their alarm over soaring Medicaid costs and proposed federal cutbacks and vowed to work with them toward a compromise.

While overhauling Social Security dominates discussions in the nation's capital, financing problems with Medicaid is commanding more of the attention in the 50 state capitals.

Bush has sought \$40 billion in cuts in the program. Much of that would come from stopping states from using certain accounting techniques to draw down federal Medicaid funds. Governors brought a mixed message to the meeting: Republicans and Democrats alike are bucking the president's budget cuts to Medicaid, while embracing some of his reforms and pushing for federal willingness to allow states to experiment more.



President Bush talks with Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia (left), Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner (center) and Virginia Gov. Mark Warner (far right) on Monday.

Rights report condemns China, Mideast nations

BY BARRY SCHWEID
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. State Department in its annual report on human rights found systematic torture in Syria, serious abuses in China and the killing of civilians by government-backed militia in Sudan's troubled Darfur province.

Egypt, a close ally of the United States in Mideast peacemaking, was condemned for security forces torturing prisoners and for mass arrests. Iran's "poor human rights record worsened," according to the report, released Monday.

North Korea is one of the world's most repressive and brutal regimes, the report said. An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 people are believed to be in detention camps in remote areas, and defectors report many have died from torture, starvation and disease.

Syria's human rights record is poor, the report said. Syrians do not have a right to change their government and "continuing serious abuses included the use of torture in detention, which at times resulted in death," unfair trials and arbitrary arrests.

But there were several bright spots. Terrorism fell off in post-Taliban Afghanistan, respect for human rights in Ukraine rose with the staging of free elections, and what the report said were prospects for peace in Iraq "help create momentum for the improvement of human rights practices."

China, described as an authoritarian state, denies its citizens freedom to oppose the Chinese Communist Party's political system, the report said. The government used fear on terror as a pretext for cracking down on peaceful Uighur separatists and does not permit outsiders to monitor the human rights situation in the country, the report to Congress added.

The report also said Russia's law enforcement personnel engaged in torture, violence and other brutal or humiliating treatment, and in the government's continuing struggle against rebels in Chechnya, both sides showed little respect for basic human rights.

'Million Dollar Baby' cleans Oscar's clock

'Aviator' lands five awards, but Eastwood film nabs biggest prizes

BY DAVID GERMAIN

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Backstage at the Academy Awards, Clint Eastwood contemplated how deserving he was to come away with this best picture and directing triumph, with his second for the boxing tale "Million Dollar Baby."

"There's a lot of great movies that have won the Academy Award, and a lot of great movies that haven't," said Eastwood, whose film also earned Hilary Swank her second best actress Oscar and Morgan Freeman the supporting actor prize. Humbly, Eastwood added, "You just do the best you can."

Other acting awards Sunday night went to performers in real-life roles, Jamie Foxx as lead actor for his uncanny emulation of Ray Charles in "Ray" and Cate Blanchett for supporting actress as Katharine Hepburn, the love of Howard Hughes' life, in "The Aviator."

Eastwood's triumph meant fresh heartbreak for Martin Scorsese, whose Hughes epic "The Aviator" won the most awards with five but failed to bring him the directing Oscar that has eluded him throughout his distinguished career.

Scorsese, now a five-time loser, matched the record of Oscar futility held by a handful of legendary filmmakers such as Alfred Hitchcock and Robert Altman, who also went 0-for-5 in the directing category.

Eastwood, who directed a segment of Scorsese's music-documentary TV series "The Blues," had kind words for his rival backstage.

"I was kind of a little disappointed when they started building a competition between Marty and me," Eastwood said. "I have the greatest respect for him and all the films he's done over the years."

Blanchett echoed Eastwood's praise.

"Certainly, working with Martin Scorsese was an absolute minute-by-minute education without him ever being grandiose about it," Blanchett said.

It was the second straight year an Eastwood film won two of the four acting Oscars. Swank as a tenacious fighter who rises to champion status before her life takes a cruel twist, Freeman as a worldly wise ex-boxer.



Director Clint Eastwood poses Sunday with the Oscars he won for best director and best picture for his boxing movie "Million Dollar Baby" at the 77th Academy Awards.

Last year, Eastwood's dark morality play "Mystic River" earned the lead actor prize for Sean Penn and the supporting actor award for Tim Robbins.

Freeman, who costarred in Eastwood's 1992 film "Unforgiven," said he is the sort of director who gives actors the freedom to cut loose and perform their own way. The Western was Eastwood's first Oscar win for best picture and director.

"If he hires you, he hires you because he feels like you know what to do," Freeman said. "And he's very, very largely out of the way. He directs the picture, you do the acting. I love that, I think that most of the people that he works with love that."

Swank once again beat out main rival Annette Bening, nominated for the theater farce "Being Julia." Bening had been the front-runner for "American Beauty" five years ago but lost to Swank.

With unremarkable career results since



AP photos

From left, actors Morgan Freeman, Cate Blanchett, Hilary Swank and Jamie Foxx pose after winning Oscars Sunday at the 77th Academy Awards in Los Angeles. Freeman took home the supporting actor honor for his role in "Million Dollar Baby," Blanchett was honored as best supporting actress in "The Aviator," Swank won for best actress in "Million Dollar Baby" and Jamie Foxx received the best actor honor for his role in "Ray."



Left: Composer Andrew Lloyd Webber embraces singer Beyonce Knowles after they performed the best original song nominee "Learn to Be Lonely" from "The Phantom of the Opera." Right: Actor Al Pacino walks off the stage with director Sidney Lumet after presenting Lumet with an honorary Oscar.

her first win, Swank had been in danger of becoming one of those actresses who fades from view after an Oscar success.

"The truth is, after 'Boys Don't Cry,' I realized how few and far between the great roles are," Swank said. "I am beyond thankful for finding 'Million Dollar Baby.'"

Critics say Scorsese's best work is decades behind him, noting that recent epics such as "The Aviator" and "Gangs of New York" do not measure up to earlier masterpieces such as "Mean Streets" and "Raging Bull."

On the other hand, Eastwood has entered a late-career zenith, delivering complex character studies two years in a row that rank toward the top of his long resume as actor and director.

A last-minute addition to the Oscar race, "Million Dollar Baby" did not even begin shooting until June and had not been scheduled for release in 2005 until distributor Warner Bros. took a look at an early cut and scrambled to release it in December.

At 74, Eastwood became the oldest directing winner ever.

He said he had great respect for many young directors such as Alexander Payne, who shared the adapted screenplay Oscar for the wine-country ramble "Sideways," which also had a best picture nomination.

"There's a lot of young guys coming along, but I'd like to say to the various financiers, don't forget the senior guys. The senior guys and gals are there, willing to do their best work for you."

A sharp awards broadcast with Rock as the host

BY FRAZIER MOORE

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — In the lingo of the moment, Chris Rock scored big on Sunday's Oscarcast with his charm offensive.

Rock did nothing to rile the FCC, as some had feared or hoped.

Nor, as some had feared or hoped, did he relegate the Oscars themselves to supporting-player status. What he did do was give "The 77th Annual Academy Awards" a needed pick-me-up, presiding over the broadcast with saucy finesse.

In its never-ending quest to shake off its accumulated cobwebs, the Oscarcast had taken an unusually bold step in hiring him. It seemed to acknowledge that, for many viewers, there was more suspense in seeing what the irrepressible comedian might say or do than in finding out who would claim this year's crop of trophies.

Maybe so. But the ABC show proved a satisfying balance of personality and ceremony. Thank goodness. This was a night apallingly devoid of juicy flare-ups, screwups, breakdowns or bombshells (unless you count poor Martin Scorsese missing out, yet again, as best director).

Rock's opening monologue wasn't a home run, but he warmed up quickly.

He needed nearly every actor within earshot by observing, "There's only four real stars, and the rest are just popular people. Clint Eastwood is a star. Tobey Maguire's just a boy in tights."

He vowed not to slam the president, then marveled at George Bush's re-election despite certain missteps: "When Bush got into office there was a surplus of money. Now there's, like, a \$70 trillion deficit. Just imagine if YOU worked at the Gap, and you're closing out your register and YOU'RE \$70 trillion short!"

Later, a pre-taped remote found Rock visiting the nearby Magic Johnson movie house to talk to "ordinary people," and he had fun with the fact that many of these black cineastes had not seen, nor even heard of, the Oscar-nominated films.

In sum, the broadcast felt brisk, though not rushed. It felt modern and refreshingly free of chronic self-importance. (Could that really be?) It was a night when Prince was a presenter and the cellist Yo-Yo Ma performed.

A warm tribute to the late Johnny Carson treated viewers to clips from his many years in a role much of the audience had forgotten he once had: hosting the Oscars.

But what took so long for the producers to figure out this winning formula? Short of Michael Moore and Mel Gibson duking it out, this year's Oscarcast could hardly have been better.



AP

Host Chris Rock gave the Academy Awards a needed pick-me-up, presiding over the broadcast with saucy finesse.

Prosecutor accuses Jackson of 'strange sexual behavior'

By LINDA DEUTSCH
The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — A prosecutor laid out the child molestation and conspiracy case against Michael Jackson on Monday, telling jurors the singer exploited a 13-year-old boy and exposed him to "strange sexual behavior" and that an employee told the child his mother could be killed.

In his opening statement, District Attorney Thomas Sneddon also said that Jackson showed the boy adult material on the Internet from the first time he stayed at Neverland in 2000, when the boy was 10 years old.

Opening statements began after Superior Court Judge Rodney S. Melville read the indictment to the jury, revealing the names of five unindicted alleged co-conspirators.

The judge also read 28 overt acts allegedly committed in a conspiracy surrounding the alleged molestation of the boy, a cancer patient, at Jackson's Neverland ranch and a purported attempt to keep his family silent.

Sneddon referred to the boy by name after telling the court it would be impossible to proceed without using the real names of the child and his family.

Sneddon, Santa Barbara County's top prosecutor, told the jury that the case was about Jackson's "desperate attempt" to salvage his career after the airing of the television documentary "Living With Michael Jackson," in which

the pop star is seen holding hands with the boy and saying he allows children to sleep in his bed.

Sneddon said that when the documentary aired in early 2003, "Jackson's world was rocked" and that one of the co-conspirators described the airing as "a train wreck."

The defense opening statement was to follow the prosecution's presentation.

The indictment, which had not been released before, stated that between February and March 2003, Jackson employee Frank Tyson threatened the accuser, telling him that "Michael could make the family disappear" and that he also said, "I could have your mother killed."

Cents and Sensibility Money tip of the day

Better wages, benefits

The Associated Press

As general economic conditions improve, employers may be slightly more generous about wage increases when contract talk time arrives, according to a survey of companies' bargaining objectives.

However, employers are still keen on achieving labor concessions when it comes to the price arena of health care and insurance benefits, with 69 percent saying they need to pursue savings in those areas. But almost that percentage, 59 percent, said better wages might be an option.

And where would employers most like to cut or eliminate benefits? Prescription drug coverage led that group, with nearly a third (32 percent) citing that cost. That was followed by doctor visits (28 percent), hospital coverage (26 percent) and surgical coverage (26 percent).

Almost a fourth of employers that have restrictions on outsourcing or subcontracting will be seeking to curtail or eliminate those provisions in 2005.

The results are from a survey of 100 U.S. companies by Washington-based BNA Inc., which publishes financial reports and other analysis for business.



A herd of wild horses is rounded up in July on the Diamond Mountain range near Eureka, Nev. Overpopulation of the herds requires the Bureau of Land Management to round up the horses. The horses will either be adopted out or sent to sanctuaries in the Midwest.

Congress repeals ban on slaughter of wild mustangs

By SCOTT SONNER
The Associated Press

RENO, Nev. — For the first time in more than a generation, the mustang — the very symbol of the American West — can be slaughtered for horsemeat.

In December, Congress repealed the 34-year-old ban on the slaughter of wild horses that run free across the West. The move has brought a powerful backlash from activists, who want to reinstate full protection for the mustangs.

"It is really a slap in the face to the American people," said Betty Kelly, co-founder of the horse protection group Wild Horse Spirit in Virginia City, Nev.

Acting on behalf of ranchers who say the horses eat forage needed by cattle, Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., attached the amendment in December to a spending bill that President Bush signed into law last month. It allows for the sale for slaughter of some older and unwanted horses that are captured during the periodic government roundups aimed at reducing the wild population, now estimated at 33,000 across 10 Western states. About 19,000 of the horses are in Nevada.

A bill to reinstate the slaughter ban was introduced in Congress last month. Responsibility for rounding up horses on federal land and selling them rests with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which has yet to send any of the animals to slaughter.

BLM officials said the agency is reaching out to animal protection groups and is optimistic that before the summer, it will find new homes for the 8,900 horses and burros that could be subject to slaughter. "We realize it is a challenge, but we think there are owners out there that would provide the kind of care we are looking for," BLM spokesman Tom Gorey said from Washington, D.C.

The issue has dogged the Interior Department and Congress since Nevada's Velma Johnson, also known as Wild Horse Annie, and a legion of schoolchildren persuaded Congress to outlaw the use of motor vehicles to hunt the mustangs in 1959. That was followed by the Wild Horse and Burro Protection Act of 1971.

Sylvia Fascio, a fifth-generation Nevada horse breeder, said there are too many wild horses roaming the BLM land next to her ranch, and some should be sold for slaughter.

"I enjoy the wild horses. I'm blessed to live out here among them and it's a very romantic thought. But there is such a thing as reality," Fascio said.

FLY HOME
Jan - Mar Specials
Atlanta.....\$339
New York.....\$299
New Orleans.....\$339
Phoenix.....\$339
Los Angeles.....\$465
San Francisco.....\$439
Detroit.....\$339

Tax not incl. All fares are roundtrip for travel Jan-Mar 05.
Group fares to all destinations.

Vacations by Air
Egypt 1 week EU 1050
Russia 1 week \$ 1390
Full week sightseeing incl.
CRUISES EU 699 up
3 NIGHTS
Istanbul \$339up
TOP TOURISTIK
Call tollfree 0800FLYHOME
E-mail: top touristik@t-online.de
web: www.top touristik.de

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs	\$1,397
Dollar buys	\$1,039
British pound	\$1,57
Japanese yen (Feb. 26)	102.00
South Korean won (Feb. 26)	982.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	\$1,039
Canada (Dollar)	1.297
Denmark (Krone)	6.55
Egypt (Pound)	0.809
EUR	\$1,324/0.752
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7994
Hungary (Forint)	182.38
Iceland (Krona)	59
Israel (Shekel)	4.361
Japan (Yen)	105.21
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.27080
Norway (Krone)	5.58
Philippines (Peso)	44.7
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	1.258
Singapore (Dollar)	1.6786
South Korea (Won)	1,007.50
Switzerland (Franc)	1.2859
Thailand (Baht)	38.45
U.S. New York (Dollar)	1.2859

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for U.S. troops. South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For most currencies, the military banking rates are interbank rates. In Germany, check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

London close	
Gold	\$436.38
Silver	\$7.35

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.50
Federal funds market rate	2.25
3-month bill	2.74
30-year bond	5.25

Source: The Associated Press, Bank of America

Motorcycle Loans.

Finance up to 100%. Apply Today.

DoCommunityBank.com

CommunityBank

Operated by Bank of America Member FDIC

FINANCE UP TO

100%

The maximum loan amount is 100% of the lesser of the purchase price or MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price). The loan term is 60 months. Subject to change without notice. Credit is subject to review.

OPINIONS

Gender corraling: A true high school crush

BY SARAH M. SELTZER

In the midst of the upsurge over gender touched off by Harvard's president, Lawrence Summers, I have found myself going back to high-school memories and wondering why talented girls were constantly crying over bad math tests in the hallways.

When I was in ninth grade, geometry was my favorite subject. But this bravado didn't last, and I spent the next three years struggling with math demons. As I was followed by C's in quick succession, I liked a few areas in calculus; once I even spent a history class gleefully trying to solve a math problem. But usually it was the other way around — math class was absorbed by secretly writing sonnets in my notebook, and I left without having understood the material.

As I fell behind, I often gave up, refusing to do homework or to study. The boys in my math class shrugged off bad grades and vowed to study harder, but for me a C penetrated into my very soul, undermining my confidence and ability to enjoy the work. Every test became an agonizing challenge to myself-esteem — Will I fail? — and therefore meant far more than it should have.

My twin brother, at the same time, was losing faith in our advanced-placement English class. Most of his classmates were part of an "in crowd" of theory-savvy girls, he didn't like them. For a creative project, he wrote a series of lewd but hysterical epigrams — and he was disappointed with the grade he received. Although he had been an A student in English, he turned his attention elsewhere.

The disparity between our interests was

hardly an anomaly. The boys we knew swore they didn't "get" poetry, while most of the math "honors dropouts" were female. These girls had initially shown both aptitude and zest for the subject, but many were happy to drop down to regular math because they didn't want to face the constant threat of disaster they had experienced in honors, where everyone gets the occasional bad grade.

When I was a junior, a bunch of us staged a daylong walkout to bemoan gender inequality in a school that, despite its academic excellence, perennially had few girls in AP physics classes or in student government. The most controversial aspect of our rally was the "ratios" we posted in the hallways: the ratio of males to females who had been student-body president — 16 to 1; the ratio of men to women in AP English — 1 to 4.

The guys in parallel were incensed. "It's not our fault that women can't get elected," they said. "It's not our fault that women can't do physics." Well, no. But that wasn't our point. The point was — and is — to ask ourselves why males and females are still making such divergent choices. My theory is that my "failure" in math was due to a pre-emptive fear of failure. For girls, the value of keeping up an appearance of perfection is ingrained early, and most girls really, really don't like getting C's, just as they hate having pimples or dirt on their jeans. The exacting nature of math forces girls to confront the limits of their crafted perfection.

Although getting good grades has become the social norm for girls, being outstandingly brilliant has not. Many young women are



scared to demonstrate the aggression, the try-and-fail risk-taking found in many disciplines, but most markedly in advanced math and sciences. It makes them worry about seeming unfeminine. It makes them worry that other girls and boys won't like them.

This gender corraling works both ways; boys don't want to step outside of their gender norms either. Talking about books means talking about feelings. As a result, the once-male world of literary criticism has become markedly female at the undergraduate level — to the detriment of everyone's understanding of literature.

It's not the girls' fault or the boys' fault. But it is our collective responsibility to change this.

What if there was no norm? What if all girls were unfraid to keep trying until they "got" physics, and guys weren't afraid to "get" poetry? Would we line up in equal numbers to pursue every field? Probably not. But as Summers should have known, until that opportunity presents itself, innate differences are not even worth talking about.

Sarah M. Seltzer is a former editor of the Harvard *Crimson's* magazine; this column, which is first appeared in the Los Angeles Times, was adapted from a column in the *Crimson*.

Cool enough for Congress, good enough for citizens

BY REP. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

Millions of people have come to the United States seeking the American dream. Generation after generation has worked hard to provide for their families, and Social Security has protected each in their later years. With this vital program facing serious financial difficulties, we need to make the adjustments necessary to strengthen and fix Social Security.

By including voluntary personal retirement accounts, we can help strengthen Social Security for future generations. These accounts can help give low-income families and minorities a better and brighter financial future.

Let me be clear, Congress will not pass any reform that would change benefits for current and near-retirees.

Social Security is the only source of retirement income for 41 percent of elderly Hispanics, so it is extremely important that elderly Americans continue to receive all of the benefits that have been promised to them.

As for Social Security's financial future, many Democrats hold illusions that Social Security is fine. The reality is that the program faces serious problems down the road. In only 13 years — by 2018 — Social Security is projected to receive less in payroll taxes, so it will pay out in benefits from its stored bonds, but the federal government will need to pay for that shortfall somehow — most likely with sharp payroll tax hikes and steep benefit cuts.

Democrats may not have a problem with this, but President Bush and Republicans do. Not only do we want to make Social Security permanently solvent, we also want to help people create nest eggs for themselves and their families. Personal retirement accounts can help accomplish this goal and

would be a boon for all Americans, especially Hispanics and other minorities.

By making a change that allows younger workers to voluntarily place a small portion of their Social Security taxes in personal retirement accounts, we can take a promising step toward fixing Social Security for future generations while still fully protecting benefits for retirees and near-retirees.

For the first time, low-income individuals would have the opportunity to pass a nest egg on to their children or grandchildren.

Hispanics are hard-working, family-oriented people. Like most Americans, they value financial security and they also want an opportunity to build nest eggs that they can pass on to their families. Unfortunately, because many Hispanics currently work in low- or middle-income jobs, they lack the real opportunity to put any money aside for retirement. They also are often too preoccupied with meeting their day-to-day and

month-to-month financial needs to focus on saving for their retirement.

Some Democrats, including members of Congress, say a personal retirement account is a risky gamble. But if such an account is such a gamble, then why do members of Congress participate in a program for their retirement similar to what President Bush is proposing for every other American?

Trust me, if these accounts were bad, members of Congress would never participate in them. Instead, it is for that very reason that we should allow people to create Social Security personal retirement accounts. It allows them the opportunity to invest in our country while also giving them the opportunity to build a secure nest egg.

Hispanics are a proud people who want to provide for their families. They support low taxes and prefer having a say in their retirement rather than rely on faceless bureaucrats. President Bush's Social Security reform principles fit them to a T.

By establishing a system with personal retirement accounts, Hispanics will be better able to create retirement income, increasing wealth in low-income and moderate-income households, and encouraging independence from the government.

As Naomi Lopez Bauman, a member of The Heritage Foundation's Committee for Leadership Working Group on Social Security Reform, has noted: "Personal retirement accounts, even with modest rates of return, have an enormous potential to boost retirement income and reduce poverty dramatically. Personal retirement accounts also have the potential to promote intergenerational wealth for all socioeconomic groups."

Hispanics, like all Americans, want a secure retirement. Personal retirement accounts can give them something to call their own and leave for the next generation — and help make their American dream a reality.

Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, R-Fla., is a member of the House Budget Committee.

Mallard Fillmore



"Sexual Orientation: The only human attribute that liberals think is genetic... everything else is cultural."



BY BRUCE TINSLEY

(2005) by King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.



Quick Trips

Remembering Remagen

Museum pays homage to city's role in WWII

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

War has a way of ripping the covers off sleepy little villages. Small towns like Sainte-Mère-Eglise, Bastogne and Aachen, for example, gained notoriety during and after World War II for reasons unique unto themselves. Sometimes the reasons became a source of pride, and other times a source of shame or anguish.

One place unwittingly dragged into the spotlight was Remagen, a quiet riverside village in western Germany that once had a railroad bridge.

Before World War II, "nobody spoke of Remagen," said Hans Peter Kürten, who founded a peace museum within the bridge's tower walls.

That obscurity changed the afternoon of March 7, 1945, when a company of U.S. 9th Armored Division soldiers emerged from the woods west of town.

Before and below them stood the Ludendorff Bridge and the Rhine River. It was a sight that must have had them rubbing their eyes because the German army, under Adolf Hitler's orders, was destroying bridges spanning the Rhine to slow the Allies' advance.

To make matters even more favorable for the Allies, the Germans were lightly defending the bridge, which only the night before had been ready for vehicle traffic. Within three hours, the bridge was in U.S. hands, thousands of troops were hustling across under German artillery and small-arms fire, and many, many more were making a beeline for Remagen.

"It's called the 'Miracle of Remagen,'" Kürten said. "The Germans didn't have enough soldiers and munitions to defend or blow up the bridge. The war in Europe ended sooner because of it."

Some soldiers described the bridge as ugly, though it allowed them and many others to "cross the Rhine with dry feet," as the rallying cry went. To Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the bridge was "worth its weight in gold."

Weakened by the German army's persistent efforts to destroy it, the span collapsed 10 days later, killing at least 28 U.S. soldiers. (Kürten says the number is really 30.)

Today, all that remains of the bridge are the dark, stone towers opposite each other on the Rhine.



Stars and Stripes

U.S. soldiers stand guard as engineers from the 9th Armored Division strengthen the bridge at Remagen, Germany, in March 1945. The bridge was originally for railroad traffic, but planks were placed across the tracks so wheeled vehicles could cross. The Germans, who tried to destroy the bridge with explosives and air attacks, finally succeeded, killing 28 engineers who had been trying to strengthen the bridge.



PHOTOS BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY/Stars and Stripes

Hans Peter Kürten, who founded the museum in Remagen 25 years ago, stands before a display depicting everyday life for German troops. The main themes of the museum are war, peace and the history of the Ludendorff Bridge.

On the Remagen side of the river is where Kürten and others in town joined forces to create their museum to war and peace.

"It's nice they did something with it [the towers]," Georg Masek of Switzerland said as he toured the museum. "When I think of what happened here 60 years ago, I shiver."

When U.S. Army veterans of the operation think of Remagen in March, they get chills, too. In fact, veterans have asked Kürten and other village leaders to hold

a 60th-anniversary observance later because of the weather, and they have complied.

The museum, which is open from March through November, is a breeze to tour. The roundness of the towers and the mix of displays — German and American, war and peace — make for a short and enjoyable visit. That's especially so on a warm spring or summer



From the base of the old bridge tower in Remagen, the other half of what remains of the Ludendorff Bridge serves as a landmark for tourist and barge operators on the Rhine River.

day when the cafes are open and the walk along the boardwalk is populated with visitors and residents alike.

E-mail Kevin Dougherty at: doughertyk@mail.strips.osd.mil.



PETER JAEGER/Stars and Stripes

On the QT



Directions

The Friedensmuseum Brücke von Remagen is along the Rhine River on the south side of town. Get off Autobahn 61 (north of Koblenz) at the Koblenz exit and take Highway 266 east toward town. At Highway 9, turn left and go north. The road enters Remagen from the south, with the river on the right. Look for the signs to the museum, though parking in town is OK because of the walkway running along the river.



Times

The museum typically opens on or about March 7 and closes at the end of November. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., though in March, April and November, the closing time is 5 p.m.



Costs

Admission to the museum is 3.50 euros for adults; children, students and disabled people pay 1 euro; individuals pay 2 euros apiece in groups of 10 or more; the family rate is 6 euros.



Food

There are a few cafes and restaurants on the town square. Among them is the Weinhaus Grüner Kranz, a yellow building with green shutters.



Information

The museum's Web site is www.bruecke-remagen.de. An English version is available. Telephone: (+49) (0) 2642-21863 or (+49) 2642-20159.

— KEVIN DOUGHERTY



KEY: Sunny, Pt. Cls, Mostly cldy, Cloudy, Showers, Tstorms, Rain, Rain/snow, Snow, Cold frnt, Warm frnt, Trough, Occluded fr, Staty frnt, Low High

AFRICA

Capa Town	84	LO	Mogadishu	88	LO
Dakar	80	63	Nairobi	86	56
Free town	89	76	Rabat	58	41
Kinshasa	90	74	Tripoli	58	41

THE WORLD

Amsterdam	47	31	Manila	88	73
Bahran	71	57	Mexico City	73	48
Beijing	42	24	Montreal	25	14
Bombay	74	60	Riyadh	86	60
Buenos Aires	67	61	Sao Paulo	86	75
Calcutta	88	64	Sofia	23	07
Chengdu	62	54	Sydney	81	67
Chicago	48	40	Tokyo	46	35

MIDEAST

Abu Dhabi	84	65	Baghdad	77	53
Amman	84	65	Beirut	77	53
Antananarivo	84	65	Bombay	91	76
Asmara	84	65	Buenos Aires	67	61
Asmara	84	65	Calcutta	88	64
Asmara	84	65	Chengdu	62	54
Asmara	84	65	Chicago	48	40
Asmara	84	65	Manila	88	73
Asmara	84	65	Mexico City	73	48
Asmara	84	65	Montreal	25	14
Asmara	84	65	Riyadh	86	60
Asmara	84	65	Sao Paulo	86	75
Asmara	84	65	Sofia	23	07
Asmara	84	65	Sydney	81	67
Asmara	84	65	Tokyo	46	35

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50
Alaska	21	50	Alaska	21	50

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

As of noon, Eastern U.S. time

Bands separate high temperature zones for the day.

© 2005 AccuWeather, Inc.

EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelex: Cloudy with rain and snow showers. Highs in the upper 20s to lower 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Cloudy with rain and snow showers. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Tuesday lows in the 30s to lower 30s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s.

France: Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated rain and snow showers. Highs in the mid 30s to mid 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to lower 30s.

Northern Germany: Cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs in the mid 20s to lower 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to mid 20s.

Southern Germany: Mostly cloudy to cloudy. Highs in the upper teens to upper 20s. Tuesday lows in the upper single digits to upper teens.

Hungary: Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 20s. Tuesday lows in the mid teens.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to mid 30s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to upper 30s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy with morning snow showers. Highs in the lower 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper teens to lower 20s.

Norway: Mostly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs in the lower 20s to lower 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper single digits to upper teens.

Portugal, Spain: Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s to lower 50s. In the north, Tuesday lows in the lower 20s to lower 30s. In the south, Tuesday lows in the upper 30s to lower 40s.

Turkey: Cloudy with rain showers. In the north, highs in the mid 40s to mid 40s with Tuesday lows in the lower to mid 30s. In the south, highs in the upper 50s to mid 50s with Tuesday lows in the mid 40s to mid 50s.

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAF Operational Weather Squadron home page at: <https://ows.sembach.af.mil>
<http://ows.public.sembach.af.mil>

SUN & MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	6:15 AM	6:30 AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	7:00 AM	7:07 AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	6:00 PM	6:01 PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	6:08 PM	6:09 PM

Scheduled to ETS or PCS?

Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS & STRIPES
 Your Hometown Newspaper

Fuel truck stolen

ME MILFORD — Police are investigating the theft of a heating fuel truck that was stolen and later found drained of the 2,000 gallons of heating oil and kerosene it was carrying.

The truck was stolen from Halcant's Fuel & Bottled Gas Co. in Milford, according to the Penobscot County Sheriff's Department.

When it was found at 3:45 a.m. more than 20 miles away in Carmel, the keys were in the ignition, but the 1,650 gallons of heating oil and 350 gallons of kerosene were missing, said Deputy Will Sheehan. He valued the fuel at \$3,000.

Fatal accident

IL ST. PETERSBURG — An elderly Illinois woman drove her Lincoln Town Car through a Wachovia Bank parking lot and crashed into a concrete overhang, killing a bank customer who had just emerged from the building.

The customer, Katherine Weber, 51, of St. Petersburg, was taken to Bayfront Medical Center, where she died a few hours later.

Police said Marjory B. Thompson, 88, was driving a silver late-model Lincoln when the car accelerated, jumped a curb and slammed into a support holding an overhang that protected the east entrance to the bank. The impact caused the overhang to collapse onto the walkway.

Police seize \$5M cash

NJ CRANBURY — State police seized more than \$5 million in cash from a tractor-trailer found idling unattended for two days on the shoulder of a roadway, authorities said.

The driver, Salvatore Delarosa, 46, of San Bernardino, Calif., was arrested on a money laundering charge.

"The cash is the proceeds of illegal conduct, possibly narcotics activity, but that still remains under investigation," Attorney General Peter Harvey said. Investigators have not yet determined the exact source of the money.

Delarosa was seen near the vehicle, said state police spokesman Capt. Al Della Fave.

Train kills deaf man

PA YORK — A man struck and killed by a train was so hard of hearing that he probably never heard it approaching, his brother said.

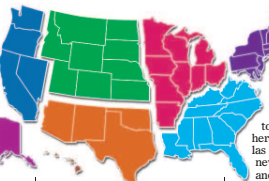
Forrest "Jack" Rhoades Jr., 54, died several hours after he was struck by a slow-moving train as he walked to a friend's house, authorities said.

"He was stubborn and did not want to go get help" for his hearing and sight deficiencies, said his brother, Jason Rhoades.

"He left his bifocals here at my house."

Rhoades died in the hospital about three hours after he was struck by the train on Feb. 11.

"He was a good brother. He was



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

always there for me," Jason Rhoades said.

Pot seized at fish shop

RI NEWPORT — Suspecting something fishy at Long Wharf Seafood, detectives searched the retail store and left with evidence that some customers were buying more than just fillets of cod and haddock.

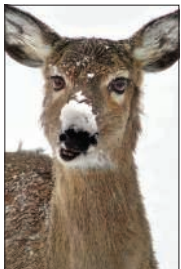
The investigators allege that store owner John Caminiti was selling marijuana out of the business, according to Sgt. James Gunn. They seized more than 20 half-ounce bags of marijuana, mostly from store freezers.

Drug cartels growing

TX DALLAS — At least three drug-related slayings in North Texas are being blamed on a team of rogue Mexican commandos accused of orchestrating dozens of murders along the U.S.-Mexico border, raising fears that the drug war is moving north.

Dallas and federal officials say eight to 10 Zetas — former members of the Mexican army who defected to Mexico's Gulf drug cartel in the late 1990s — have been operating in North Texas since 2003, The Dallas Morning News reported.

The Zetas are accused of fatally shooting 26-year-old Christian Alejandro Meza in December. Authorities also believe they were involved in the deaths of Mathew Frank Geisler and Brandon Gallegos, both 19 and from Laredo,



Oh deer

A deer wandering through the hills of Oglebay Park in Wheeling, W.Va., gets a pile of snow on its nose while looking for food.

whose bodies were found in a burning sport utility vehicle in September. Both had been shot.

"We're seeing an alarming number of incidents involving the same type of violence that's become all too common in Mexico, right here in Dallas," a former Dallas narcotics officer told the newspaper on the condition of anonymity.

License reinstated

CT HARTFORD — Jonathan Googel, a key figure in the biggest real estate fraud in Connecticut history, regained his real estate license.

Googel and business partner Benjamin Sisti built a \$2 billion real estate empire that collapsed in 1990, costing over 6,000 investors more than \$300 million. Googel was sentenced to seven years in prison.

Missing rings

ME WATERTVILLE — Police are investigating the possible theft of four rings valued at more than \$20,000 from Mount St. Joseph nursing home.

The jewelry was reported missing by relatives of nursing home patients in two separate incidents on two floors at the nursing home, said Waterville police Det. David Caron.

The first incident was reported Feb. 4 by Fritz Bushmann, whose mother, Elizabeth, is a patient at the nursing home and who is missing a ring worth about \$15,000, according to Caron. Bushmann told police he saw the ring the night before when he was at the nursing home.

Mine fire flickering out

VA OAKWOOD — A fire that's been burning for 12 days in a massive southwestern Virginia coal mine appears to be flickering out.

A bore sunk 2,400 feet into Consol Energy Inc.'s Buchanan County mine to the source of the fire found no evidence of flames or smoke, and the ambient temperature was 63 degrees.

"It would have been bad news if it was 800 degrees," Consul vice president Thomas Hoffman said. "If that means the fire's out, I don't know."

Hoffman said several more probes still must be sunk to be sure, noting that the 24-square-mile mine is Virginia's largest. "These things are the size of small cities underground," he said.

Kitchen duty a bad idea

PA LEBANON — An inmate at Lebanon County Prison was convicted by a jury Thursday of assault for throwing urine in the face of another inmate who was on kitchen duty.

Jurors deliberated for only about an hour before convicting Warren Eugene Jeffries, 40, of a charge of assault by a prisoner.

The other inmate, Omar A. Ortiz, testified that he bent down to pick up an empty food tray placed in front of Jeffries' cell on Aug. 14 when a cup of urine was thrown in his face.



Welcome home, dad Sgt. Richard Hoffman kisses his 8-month-old daughter, Isabella, who was born while he was deployed. Hoffman and other members of the Army Reserve 343rd Quartermaster Company participated in a homecoming ceremony at the company's headquarters in Rock Hill, S.C.

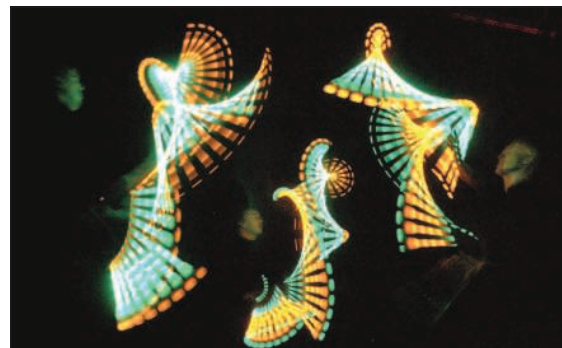


Parallel lives The first wave of cross-country skiers floods the trail at the start of the American Birkebeiner at Cable Union Airport in Cable, Wis. The 51-kilometer race ended in Hayward, Wis.

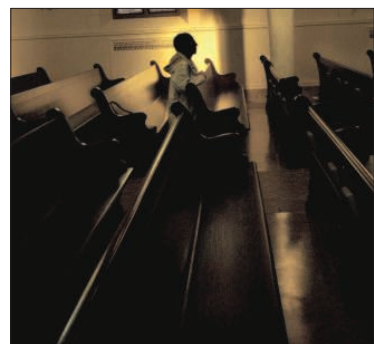


Car sandwich

Fairfield, Calif., Police Cpl. Don Schneider writes a report after a four-car pile-up. The driver of the Volkswagen, as well as the driver of the Chevrolet resting on top of it, were transported to Kaiser Hospital and North Bay Medical Center with unknown injuries.



Lighting up the stage Members of LUMA, a light performance group, present an illuminating show at the Flickinger Center for Performing Art in Alamogordo, N.M.



Peace and tranquility A parishioner at St. Ann's Cathedral in Great Falls, Mont., prays the rosary before the start of noon Mass.



Horsin' around Boston Red Sox first baseman Kevin Millar pets Mike, a 6-year-old, 2,000-pound Clydesdale horse, during a break at batting practice at spring training camp in Fort Myers, Fla.



Fur Rendezvous A snow sculpture of a bear and walrus performing an Eskimo dance is seen in Anchorage, Alaska, as part of the Fur Rendezvous snow sculpture competition. Each contestant is given a block of snow from which to sculpt their art, with the winners going to the National Snow Sculpting Competition.

Litterbug jewel thieves

CT GREENWICH — Two robbery suspects being chased by police hurled diamond rings and pearl necklaces onto a highway before their truck crashed and they were arrested, authorities said.

Interstate 95 was closed for nearly an hour as officers looked for the jewelry. They filled several bags of watches, rings, necklaces and bracelets, including some pieces worth thousands of dollars each.

Police said the two men forced their way into Manfredi Jewels Ltd. as employees opened it, then handcuffed the four employees at gunpoint and stole jewelry worth \$1.9 million out of a safe that had just been unlocked.

None of the workers was injured. One escaped and called police, and officers chased a sport utility vehicle for 20 miles into New York City, where it crashed.

Exonerated students

AR GREENWOOD — A federal judge has ruled in favor of two honor students suspended over the content of Web pages that drew a parent's protest because of the way they depicted athletes and band members. The judge ordered that no record remain of the suspensions of Ryan Kuhl and Justin Neal.

He also ordered administrators to never mention that the pair had once been wrongly suspended.

Remodeling for school

NJ NEWARK — The Christina school board approved the \$12.8 million purchase of a vacant building at the Pencader Corporate Center to be remodeled into a middle school.

The three-year-old building was occupied for less than a year by a company that made solar panels. The school is expected to open in time for the 2006-07 year.

Two charged in stabbing

IN CLINTON — Two teens have been charged with the stabbing death of a 93-year-old Biloxi, Miss., woman in what police are describing as a botched robbery.

Matthew Craig McKamey and Joshua Ryan Tesague, both 19, are charged with capital murder in the death of Iva Elizabeth Moore. Moore, who lived alone, died of a stab wound to her neck, Biloxi Police Department Capt. Rick Kirk said.

"They broke into the house for burglary purposes and killed the old lady while they were inside," Kirk said. A kitchen knife believed to be the murder weapon was recovered in a wooded area in the vicinity, he said.

The two teens are being held at the county jail under no bond.

Downtown boost

RI PROVIDENCE — Mayor David Cicilline and developers announced plans to build a residential high-rise with luxury condominiums that they say will revitalize the downtown area.

The 32-story, glass-paneled tower will include condominiums priced at \$500,000 to \$2.5 million. Construction on the privately financed, \$90 million project is scheduled to begin in December.

Dethroning the monarch

AL MONTGOMERY — The monarch butterfly, Alabama's official state insect since 1989, could be dethroned.

A bill, sponsored by Rep. Sue Schmitz, would end the butterfly's reign as a symbol of Alabama and substitute the queen honey bee as the official state insect.

Schmitz said a beekeeper in her Madison County district suggested the change. She said it would bring attention to the bee industry in Alabama and the help that bees provide in pollinating plants in the agricultural state. So what about the monarch butterfly? "It doesn't bring any money in," she said.

Fireproof cigarettes

VT MONTPELIER — Lawmakers are considering a bill that would require all cigarettes sold in the state be fireproof.

A joint House and Senate committee took testimony on the proposal Friday. One of the witnesses, Russell Sciandra, pulled a pack of Newport menthol cigarettes from his coat pocket and showed them the tiny asterisk on the side of the package near the bar code.

It's the only indication that these cigarettes, which he purchased in New York, had been specially manufactured to burn out rather than smolder if left unattended.

Governor on defense

MO JEFFERSON CITY — Gov. Matt Blunt defended a comment he made during a recent Republican rally that Democrats can be found in Missouri only in places "where nobody wants to live anymore."

Blunt said his point was that Republicans are winning in growing communities. Democratic lawmakers from St. Louis and Kansas City perceived their cities as the targets of Blunt's one-liner.

\$600M jobs initiative

MA BOSTON — Gov. Mitt Romney unveiled a proposed \$600 million jobs initiative he says will help create up to 20,000 new jobs over the next five years. Romney says his bill would attract businesses in areas such as academic research, biotechnology and defense technology.

The bill includes \$246 million in tax relief for businesses.

Salary increase wanted

TX AUSTIN — Supreme Court Chief Justice Wallace Jefferson says Texas is losing judges because their salaries haven't kept pace with the times. Jefferson, in his annual State of the Judiciary Speech to legislators, said it's no secret that judges double or triple their salaries by returning to the private sector.

Trying to ban cameras

TX AUSTIN — The Texas House gave preliminary approval to a bill that would ban citizens from using cameras to issue citations to drivers who run red lights. Supporters of such cameras say they decrease side-impact accidents. The sponsor, Rep. Gary Elkins of Houston, said the practice serves as a moneymaking mechanism for cities.

Stories and photos from wire services

AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFN's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil>

TUESDAY MARCH 1 200

[illegible]

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2005

00:00	Doug (E)	(11:00) Movie "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom"	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	CollegeBasket	O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
00:00	Rocket Power	Access Hollywood	Access Hollywood	Star in the Big Blue House	NBC Nightly News	CollegeBasket	Late Night	Star in the Big Blue House
1:00	The Kelly Rowland	(12:00) Movie "The Hot Chick" per (1994) Diana Michael	CollegeBasketball 31 (Live)	Wheel of Fortune	ABC World News Tonight	CollegeBasketball Mississipp State at Arkansas. (Live)	"The Enterprise" Azal Prime	Wheel of Fortune
1:30	Rugrats	(12:00) Drama Michael Keaton. A labored editor piffers story to him as a lived page	Dr. Phil	CBS Evening News	The CBS Evening With Jim Lehrer		CSI: Miami "Wet Foot/ Dry Foot"	Dr. Phil
2:00	The Proud Family (E)							
2:30	The Amanda Show							
3:00	Everwood "My Brother's Keeper"							
4:00	Sister, Sister "Candidate"							
4:30	Sister, Sister							
5:00	Sesame Street (E)							
5:30	Barney & Friends (E)							
6:00	Blue's Clues (E)							
6:30	Dragon Tales (E)							
7:00	Bob the Builder							
8:00	The Wiggles							
8:30	Dora the Explorer							
9:00	Sanjay "The Food Couple"							
9:30	Sagwa-Sesame Cat							
10:00	Arthur (E)							
10:30	Reading Rainbow (E)							
11:00	Sesame Street							
11:30	Stanley "The Big Spill"							
12:00	Dora the Explorer							
12:30	The Wiggles "Food"							
13:00	Bob the Builder							
13:30	Dragon Tales (E)							
14:00	Blue's Clues "Nurture"							
14:30	Barney & Friends (E)							
15:00	Animaniac Movie Videos							
15:30	Full House "High Anxiety"							
16:00	Pokémon "The Lost Lapras"							
16:30	Yo-Gi-Got! Part 2 of 4							
17:00	Dr. Phil							
17:30	The Wild Thornberrys							
18:00	The Family 00Parents							
18:30	Rugrats							
19:00	Green Stevens							
19:30	Kenan & Kat (Part 1 of 2)							
20:00	Gilmore Girls "Lost and Found"							
20:30	Degrassi: The New							
21:00	Degrassi: The New							
21:30	The Cosby Show							
22:00	Home Improvement							
22:30	Kouchoy by an Angel "She's a Rose"							

FACES

Gibson sells Montana ranch

Actor Mel Gibson has sold his 45,000-acre Bearfoot Ranch in Montana, in a multimillion-dollar handshake deal with a neighbor, the buyers said.



Gibson

Kent and Pam Williams said they signed the deed, but said the agreement prevents either party from divulging the purchase price.

"Pam and I were worried that if it got in the wrong hands, the valley would be subdivided and split up," Kent Williams told The Billings Gazette.

The actor and director bought the ranch in 1988, and the Williams own the adjoining 2,000-acre ranch.

"We shared an awful lot of fence," Williams said. "He's been a real good neighbor."

They made a verbal deal to purchase the ranch in January.

"Everything was on a handshake," Williams said.

Time is on Slater's side

The opening of the Broadway revival of "The Glass Menagerie" has been pushed back by a week to give its newest cast member — Christian Slater — more time in front of an audience.

Slater joins "Menagerie," replacing Dallas Roberts as Tom, the narrator of the Tennessee Williams drama.

It was to have opened March 15 at New York's Ethel Barrymore Theatre. It will now open March 22, Philip Rinaldi, a spokesman for the show, said.

The revival, directed by David Leveaux, stars Jessica Lange as the domineering mother, Amanda Wingfield.



Slater

Writer hopes Hartnett reads newspaper

A man who thinks he has written a script perfect for Josh Hartnett has taken out a half-page newspaper ad in the actor's hometown to catch his attention.

Paul Martin Hennessy said he does not know anyone in Hollywood and failed to reach Hartnett's agent through traditional means. So, he took out an ad in City Pages, a free alternative newspaper in St. Paul, Minn.

"Dear Josh Hartnett," the ad reads. "In the land of the free and the home of the brave where equal opportunity is open to all, there seems to be a gap in the American Dream, actually, more of a catch 22."

Hennessy, of Alton, Mo., said his script about a 1942 flat fire at a Boston night club could earn the star of "Pearl Harbor" and "Black Hawk Down" an Academy Award.

Hartnett, 26, is a 1996 graduate of Minneapolis South High School. His family still lives in St. Paul.

Clinton to address City Year members

Former President Bill Clinton plans to address members of the City Year service organization at their national convention this spring, organizers said.

The Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock will host part of the convention. Clinton inaugurated City Year Little Rock during his library's opening week last year.

National City Year Chairman Eli Segal says about 1,500 people are expected to attend the convention, scheduled for May 31 through June 5.

"This is mostly a platform for young people to see how they can get involved in the community through City Year and beyond," Segal said.

City Year was founded in 1988 in Boston. Participants perform a year of community service in exchange for a college scholarship. It is partly funded by Americorps, the national service program created by Clinton and modeled on City Year.



Clinton

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



NEW LINE CINEMA/AP

As Tim Avery, Jamie Kennedy is about to discover the powers of the Mask of Loki, a mythological object that transforms its user into a manic shape-shifter alter-ego in "Son of the Mask."

Jamie Kennedy aims to emerge from Jim Carrey's shadow in 'Son of the Mask'

By TERRY LAWSON

Knight Ridder Newspapers

On one hand, "Son of the Mask" star Jamie Kennedy knows he has the opportunity to star in a brand-name sequel, playing a character unlike any he's played before. He can introduce himself to a new, family audience.

On the other, there's always the risk of "Dumb & Dumber."

"I know, I know," says Kennedy, squirming in a chair in his Birmingham hotel suite. "I thought about it a long time. But in the end, I just kept hearing this mysterious voice, saying, 'Put on the mask.'"

The special effects, comic book-based comedy "The Mask," about a bank clerk who becomes a wacky, shape-shifting superhero when he dons an ancient mask with supernatural power, was released 11 years ago. It was the movie that solidified the suspicion that Jim Carrey was going to be a major movie star. It cost \$18 million and made \$120 million at the U.S. box office alone.

Carrey, however, had about as much interest in a "Mask" sequel as he did a second chapter of "Dumb and Dumber," the hit that followed.

So "Dumb and Dumber" was made without him and was a resounding flop. Nevertheless, plans to make "Son of the Mask" moved forward. And Kennedy, after much hand-wringing, signed on.

The star of the improv-prank TV series "The Jamie Kennedy Experiment" has been in more than 30 feature and TV movies since 1989, but aside from his role as an obsessed horror movie geek in the "Scream" trilogy, you missed him if you blinked. Do you remember Kennedy in "Romeo + Juliet" with Leonardo DiCaprio, or in "Enemy of the State" with Will Smith or in "Three Kings" with George Clooney? Didn't think so. And don't even bother to slow down the video to catch him in "Boogie Nights." His part was cut.

Films in which Kennedy had more substantial roles, including the superhero spoof "The Specialists" and the romantic comedy "Sol Goode," went straight to video. His primary legacy is 2003's "Meaney's Most Wanted."

"You know whoever does this is going to be jumped on for not being Jim Carrey. But I read the script and thought, 'Hey, this is pretty funny,'" he says. "And it was a

family comedy with a big cast and a lot of special effects and basically, I'm a cog in this gigantic wheel. I mean, my character is the straight man. Even the dog gets more gags than I do."

Kennedy plays Tim, a cartoonist who has become a reluctant father.

When his dog digs up the ancient mask of Loki and brings it home — and the baby tries it on — things get extremely wacky and, Kennedy hopes, funny enough to entertain both the young audience at which the film is aimed and parents who remember "The Mask."

And if it doesn't? "I can always go back to Domino's," he says.

"The Jamie Kennedy Experiment," aka "JKX," was a blend of skit humor and "Candid Camera"-style pranking, but the WB canceled it after three seasons. Now collected on DVD box sets, says Kennedy, "the show is more popular than it ever was when it was on the air."

Along with hosting and acting in nearly every bit, Kennedy also served as a producer for the show and says he discovered "a completely unexpected ability to put a series together."

He has since developed and produced two more series, the first of which debuts in States on Friday. "Living with Fran" is a sitcom starring Fran Drescher and Ryan McPartlin as her much younger lover.

Kennedy says the show, inspired by Drescher's own relationship with a younger man, was in development long before Demi Moore Ashton, but he "won't mind if people think otherwise, as long as they watch it."

The other series, "The Starlet," is an authentic reality show, with Vivica A. Fox and Paye Dunaway mentoring young women whose hearts are set on becoming popular actors. Kennedy promises that "Starlet" will be something different than other reality shows but says audiences will have to wait until next month's premiere to see how.

Meanwhile, he's hoping that people will leave their preconceptions about a "Mask" sequel that does not star Carrey at the theater door, because if they do, he says, "I think they'll have a really good time. The movie is just a lot of fun, really."

While he says he has a couple good feature roles pending while Hollywood waits to see how "Son of the Mask" is received, he's not holding his breath for "Return of Son of the Mask."

"I'll just be relieved if we get away with this one."

Horoscope

What seemed perfectly acceptable yesterday feels like a do-or-die situation today. Mercury and Pluto square off, emphasizing the extremes. It's healthy and creative to think about what would occur if a situation were taken to the limit. Express your concerns, but be careful to do so in the most political correct way possible.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(March 1). Give your all this year, and you won't be disappointed. Romance is a joy once you're over that one issue — makes a point to clear it up so you can spend your spring in love! A powerful friend helps you find career luck and advancement in June. Education is essential and worth the cost. Connecting with a Leo or Capricorn is especially beneficial.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Dress like you know your role in life is important. You're going to need all the respect you can command to make today run smoothly. Otherwise, you wind up waiting needlessly for what you deserve to have right now.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There's a temptation to throw your money after something that money just can't buy. Think: More artless commerce, more ideas/fewer things, more attention-less convenience. A Virgo's advice will help.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You earn points by simply refusing to give in to the bad social habits that pervade our society. Call people back promptly, and show up where you say you'll be. Success-bound Gemini must learn to make good on their word.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Healthy relationships are a product of consistent behavior. Resolve small differences, or let them go. If you practice this pattern consistently, maybe the big differences won't materialize at all.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Computers go down, communication lines get crossed, and important details

are dropped at inopportune moments. But don't wait until everything is working properly to move forward. There may never be such a circumstance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Mental expansion is the way to self-improvement. Besides, education is a real bargain. You'd be surprised at how experts have time for someone just learning if the student is humble and willing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You probably still feel that your energy is being drained by something you face daily. Setting a new goal will solve the problem — preferably something big. Big goals provide their own energy source.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The concept of surrender continues to be a theme. A key relationship is growing in power, practically absorbing you. You actually start making decisions that automatically give strength to the bond.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). There's something to be said for micromanagement today. At least it increases self-awareness. Each task you perform, regardless of how small it may seem, is a step toward or away from your purpose.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Seize the chance to build a better working relationship with someone you see daily. You won't be pulled to the next step on your career ladder. Rather, you'll be lifted into position by those beside and below you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Cash could fly from your pockets now. Earth-sign energy is crucial for making sound financial arrangements and being all-around fiscally savvy. So seek deals and/or advice from a Virgo, Taurus or Capricorn.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The road has blocks, but you refuse to sit and wait for them to be lifted. You're taking the detour. With a few tweaks, your plan will work, and you can prove it. Continue to be brightly hopeful.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



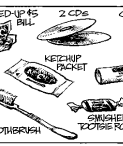
Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



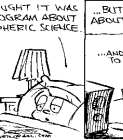
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



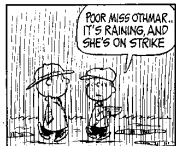
Red and Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



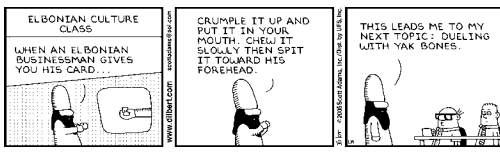
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



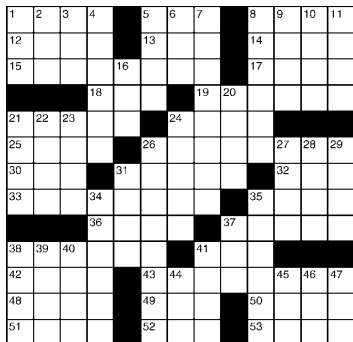
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Numbers racket?
- 5 Diamond club
- 8 Shot, for short
- 12 "Hi, sailor!"
- 13 "This tastes terrible!"
- 14 Combine resources
- 15 Scout gathering
- 17 Parliamentarian
- 18 Hurry
- 19 Rings up
- 21 Changed the bulb
- 24 Astrington
- 25 On the rocks
- 26 Beach gathering
- 30 To and ---
- 31 "... calm, --- bright"
- 32 Retainer
- 33 Official gathering
- 35 Shoppers' mecca
- 36 "... and Michele's High School Reunion"
- 37 Keeps complaining
- 38 Money (Sl.)
- 41 Actor Holbrook
- 42 Lend a hand
- 43 Wonderland
- 48 Guinness or Baldwin
- 49 Make a goof
- 50 Equipment
- 51 Network
- 52 America's Uncle
- 53 Sums

Down

- 1 Army rank (abbr.)
- 2 "Eureka!"
- 3 Male turkey
- 4 Composite
- 5 Set fire to
- 6 Succumb to time
- 7 Rainy Spanish area?
- 8 Poise
- 9 Apollo destination
- 10 Oliver Twist's request
- 11 Automaker
- 12 Ransom El ---
- 16 Umpte's call
- 20 Doesn't know the words?
- 21 Jazz phrase
- 22 Beige
- 23 Author Urus
- 24 Metallic mix

- 26 Meteorologist's subjects
- 27 Somewhere out there
- 28 Iodine source
- 29 Morays
- 31 Teensy bit
- 34 Support of a sort
- 35 Sweet Spanish wine
- 37 Upper limit
- 38 Sir's counterpart
- 39 Competent
- 40 Puzzle's center?
- 41 Injury
- 44 Geological period
- 45 Roulette bet
- 46 Lincoln offspring
- 47 Mos. add up to them

Answer to Previous Puzzle



3-1

CRYPTOQUIP

C Y S K G S I S D G P R S B T P
D R H D Z P D Y B I S B T F I P
C R N F J, E C H H E F F R J W K

E C Z G S B I W O N M O W O O M ?
Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHAT WOULD SOME MEAN GUYS CALL A TECHNOLOGICALLY CHALLENGED PERSON? A NINCOMPUTER.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: O equals M

Be wary of strangers at the door

Dear Abby: You printed a letter from "Better Safe Than Sorry," a woman who was reluctant to open her door to solicitors. Her husband insisted that if she didn't open the door and respond face-to-face, she was being rude. You advised that no rule of etiquette demands a person open the door to a stranger, and the way to avoid "buying" anything is to not listen to the pitch.

I'd like to share what a police officer told us at our community watch meeting. He said that burglars often knock on doors to see if anyone is home. The way to handle a stranger at the door is to say loudly, "Honey, I'll get it," then ask through the door, "Who is it?" Even if no one is with you, it gives the impression that you're not alone and vulnerable.

— Helpful Advice

Dear Abby



From Plano, Texas
Dear Helpful: Thank you for the help from many readers who also pointed out that a stranger at the door could be a criminal "casing the joint," or a prelude to a home invasion and assault.

Dear Abby: While attending school at the University of California in San Diego in the late '80s, I was working on a report at the home of a classmate. One of his roommates answered the door to a couple of solicitors for so-called cheap magazine subscriptions. Once the door was opened, the "salesmen" pulled out weapons, tied us up, and robbed us of money and valuables. Dangerous! I'll say, I had a shotgun pointed at the back of my head.

— John M.

Newport Beach, Calif.
Dear John M.: It could have been worse. Read on:

Dear Abby: When I was 12, a neighbor who lived only two doors down was severely beaten and raped after she "politely" opened her door to a stranger. She was lucky the man didn't kill her.

I used to have a "No Soliciting" sign on my door, but I continued to be bothered so I changed it. Now I have one that reads, "Don't sell me anything, give me anything, leave me anything or offer me anything. If you don't know me or my family, don't knock on my door and bother us!"

— Anna in Bakersfield
Dear Anna: I'd say you've covered all your bases.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can e-mail to dearabby@earthlink.net or <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DUNOB

©2005 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved

OXPRY

GINANA

DURECE

A:

A:

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argilston



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: USURY DOUB WINTRY MISFIT
Answer: When touring Germany, the user suffer took a — TURN FOR THE 'WURST

Varying views on Viagra letter

Dear Annie: I need to comment on the letter from "Married to the Old Goat in Virginia," whose 70-year-old husband returned home with a prescription for Viagra. She was upset that she'd had no input into this decision. However, this misses a much larger, often overlooked issue.

Anytime one is prescribed a drug to treat erectile dysfunction, it should be accompanied by safer-sex education. Post-menopausal women think they don't need to use a condom since pregnancy is not an issue, but there has been an alarming increase in HIV infection in older people since these drugs became available.

The Canadian AIDS Society notes that 12 percent of all new HIV infections in Canada in the first half of 2003 were in the 50-plus age group. Thank you for the opportunity to share this vital information with your readers.

— Richard S. Ferri, Ph.D., ANP, ACRN, FAAN, Provincetown, Mass.

Dear Dr. Ferri: We appreciate your pointing out that everyone

Annie's Mailbox



needs to be careful. Our readers were up in arms over this subject.

From Omaha, Neb.: My 55-year-old husband went in for his physical, and his doctor asked him if he wanted Viagra. There was no discussion of need. I think physicians do this because of

perks from drug companies. I knew of a man who got Viagra samples so he could molest children. Doctors should not be offering it like candy.

Arizona: This woman sounds like she leads a dreary life and loves it. When I mentioned Viagra to my wife, her response was "Go get it!" She is 69, and I am 70.

Louisville, Ky.: My husband, age 64, got a prescription for Viagra. I didn't know about it for three months, but he told his girlfriend right away.

Midwest: I'm 56, and my

husband suffers from erectile dysfunction.

I got up the nerve to ask him about it, hoping he'd speak to his doctor. Instead, he told me he wasn't interested in sex anymore. I can't force him to try Viagra, so I am left out of his decision, which affects two people and a marriage.

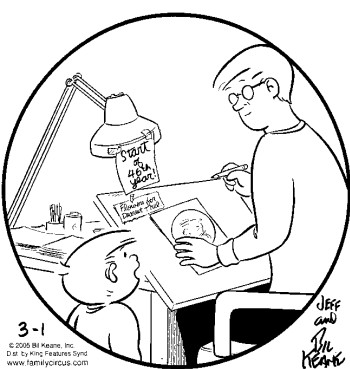
Florida: My husband often talked about getting Viagra, and I kept saying he didn't need it. At 76, he has the stamina of a 35-year-old. Still, he came home with Viagra and asked to try it out. I have to say, don't knock it until you've tried it!

Colorado: Does that old biddy ask his permission to color her hair or use cosmetics to enhance her sex-esteem? I would no more allow my wife to decide about my sexual dysfunction than I would give up reading glasses for her.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniemailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



3-1
©2005 Bill Keene, Inc. All Rights Reserved. www.familycircus.com

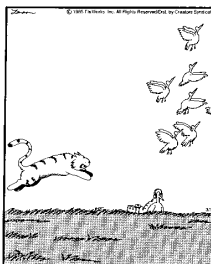


Dennis the Menace



© Gary Larson

The Far Side



Non Sequitur



Arenas cries foul when Kings get winning call

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With the game tied, Cuttino Mobley made a spin move in the lane and drew a foul on Gilbert Arenas with 1.5 seconds remaining. Arenas grabbed the ball, took it to the center circle and threw it against the other backboard in frustration.

No technical was called, but the Kings didn't need it. Mobley made the free throws to give the Sacramento Kings a 110-108 victory over the Washington Wizards on Sunday night, leaving Arenas to wonder where the fouls were when he was driving to the basket throughout the game.

Arenas matched his career high with 43 points, topping Mike Bibby's 38 for Sacramento. Arenas made 16 of 32 field goals — including seven of 11 three-pointers — in his fourth 40-point game of the season, but he was upset that he had just seven free-throw attempts.

"I don't understand it sometimes," Arenas said. "I probably drive the lane as strong as anybody in the league, and I don't get the same calls anybody gets, like an Iverson, who can shoot 26 free throws a night. Because he's little, he gets hit. Because I'm bigger, when I get hit, they don't do anything with it. But I guess I've got to get more years in the league to get that call."

As for his foul on Mobley, Arenas said: "It's not one of those calls you make when I drove the ball 10 times and he did the same thing to me and you don't call those. It's one second left, you let that go. Let's go to overtime."

Bibby made 13 of 23 shots, including five of nine from three-point range, and seven of eight free throws for the Kings, who are 2-1 midway through a six-game road trip. Mobley scored 18 points, and Brad Miller had 12 points and 10 rebounds. Sacramento improved to 2-0 — both decided in the last two seconds — since welcoming three



Roundup

new players obtained in the Chris Webber trade.

"It really gives us a boost because we were struggling," coach Rick Adelman said. "We lost a lot of close games before the trade. Winning these two is a huge boost. But in this league, you've got to get back to it up now. You've got to keep going on this trip. This just gives us a little momentum while we're trying to get organized."

While the Kings are adjusting to life with new faces Corliss Williamson, Kenny Thomas and Brian Skinner — obtained last week from Philadelphia for Webber, Matt Barnes and Michael Bradley — the Wizards' lineup looked almost as new as Sacramento's. Kwame Brown started for the first time this season because of an injury to Jared Jeffries and had 10 points and 10 rebounds. Steve Blake scored a season-high 17 points in a season-high 34 minutes after Jarvis Hayes left the game in the second quarter with tendinitis in his right knee.

The Wizards also played without point guard Larry Hughes, who had targeted Sunday's game for his return from a fractured right thumb. Hughes decided to sit out after having another set of X-rays just before tip-off.

In addition, Antawn Jamison had a rare off night, making three of 15 shots and scoring only seven points. The Wizards also struggled from the line, making just 18 of 33 free throws, crucial misses in a game that included 18 ties and 15 lead changes.

Washburn has lost five of its past six and had a five-game home winning streak snapped.

Nets 104, Cavaliers 98: Vince Carter had 34 points and 11 rebounds to help New Jersey win at

home after squandering a 21-point lead.

Jason Kidd had 14 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds as the Nets sent LeBron James and the Cavaliers to their sixth straight road loss.

James, who didn't take a shot until late in the first quarter, had 28 points and seven assists.

Nuggets 94, Hornets 93: Carmelo Anthony scored 17 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter to help the Nuggets overcome an 11-point deficit in the final 10 minutes on the road.

Dan Dickau led New Orleans with 22 points.

Timberwolves 91, Trail Blazers 83: At Portland, Ore., Latrell Sprewell scored 27 points, including a go-ahead three-pointer with just more than a minute left. Nick Van Exel scored 26 points for the Blazers, who have lost six of their last eight.

Raptors 108, Lakers 102: At Toronto, Jalen Rose scored 26 points, including eight straight late in the fourth quarter, to help the Raptors extend their winning streak to three games.

Kobe Bryant had 31 points for the Lakers, who have lost two straight following a season-high three-game win streak.

Bucks 99, SuperSonics 73: Michael Redd scored 35 points to lead the Bucks in Ray Allen's return to Milwaukee.

Allen, a fan favorite for more than six seasons with Milwaukee, scored 16 points for Seattle in his first game at the Bradley Center since being traded two years ago.

Jazz 99, Rockets 92: At Houston, Matt Harpring scored 28 points, and Raja Bell added 21 for Utah.

Tracy McGrady scored 23 points to lead the Rockets, who have dropped three straight after winning eight in a row.

Pistons 34, Warriors 88: Tayshaun Prince had 23 points to help ruin Baron Davis' home debut as a Warrior.



Wizards guard Gilbert Arenas shoots between Kings Mike Bibby (10) and Eddie House (50) during the second quarter on Sunday.

Davis, acquired in a trade with New Orleans on Thursday, didn't start and finished with 10 points and eight assists in 29 minutes.

Rasheed Wallace had 17 points and nine rebounds for the Pistons, who won for the 12th time in 13 games.

Clippers 111, Hawks 104: Corey Maggette scored 25 points to help the Clippers send Atlanta to its 19th consecutive road loss.

Bobby Simmons finished with 24 points for the Clippers, who have won two straight since a season-worst eight-game losing streak.



Heat guard Dwyane Wade, left, scores in the third quarter as Orlando Magic's Steve Francis (3) looks on in Orlando, Fla.

Wade, Joneses' threes lift Shaq-less Heat

BY MARK LONG

The Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The Miami Heat are doing just fine without Shaquille O'Neal. Dwyane Wade scored 28 points, Eddie Jones added 24 and the Heat beat the Orlando Magic for a second straight day, 112-103 Sunday night.

The Heat won both contests without O'Neal, who sat out a fourth consecutive game with a sprained left knee.

Thanks mostly to Wade, O'Neal was hardly missed in either game against Orlando.

Wade scored 14 of his 25 points in the final quarter Saturday to lead the Heat to a 101-98 victory in Miami. He drove into the lane relentlessly Sunday, creating open shots for his teammates, and finished with 11 assists.

"He put incredible pressure on us defensively to have to come in and shut his penetration down, which freed up their shooters on the outside," Magic coach Johnny Davis said. "It made us a little late getting out to contest shots."

The Heat had a season-high 11 three-pointers, including four by Eddie Jones and six by Damon Jones.

"Their three-point shooting was phenomenal tonight," Magic guard Steve Francis said. "The Joneses boy hit, like, I don't know how many threes. That's what hurt us. We couldn't get out on them. I haven't seen them hit like that all year."

Grant Hill led the Magic with 34 points, while Francis added 22 points and seven assists. But, they got little help.

Wade, meanwhile, got plenty. The Joneses came up big in the fourth.

Wade opened the final period with consecutive jumpers, then Eddie Jones scored 12 straight points for Miami. He hit two three-pointers, a jumper, a reverse layup and two free throws.

"Eddie is still a very capable guy. We just don't give him a lot of looks this year," Heat coach Stan Van Gundy said. "He's as good a third scorer as there is in the league. That may not show up statistically, but that's because of the number of times we go to our main guys. He showed tonight how capable he is if you give him some chances."

He added a jumper with less than 4 minutes to play that hit 99-93. But the Magic, who trailed by 16 at the half,

trimmed the lead to 99-97 on Hill's three-pointer and Hedo Turkoglu's layup.

Damon Jones answered with his sixth three-pointer of the night. He finished with 22 points, including a layup with 48 seconds to play that made it 108-100.

The Heat have now won all three meetings against Orlando this season, and the Magic — one the NBA's worst defensive teams — have shown little signs of being able to stop them. The Heat have scored 330 points in the three games.

Francis was in a new role for the second straight game and had similar results. Francis moved from point guard to shooting guard before Saturday's game and started that one 0-for-6 from the floor. He was 0-for-7 before making a basket Sunday and finished just 5-for-16.

"It doesn't make a difference where I am on the court," Francis said. "I'm not worried about it."

Francis has lost three in a row since Francis was fined on Feb. 22 for missing practice.

Orlando looked like it might turn things around early because of Miami's slow show. The Heat trailed 12-4 after the first 4½ minutes, but Wade's dunk gave them a 20-18 lead that they never relinquished.



Crews work on the cars during the first pit stop in Sunday's NASCAR Auto Club 500 at Fontana, Calif. Greg Biffle won the race.

Making a wild ride

Biffle just hangs on to win Sunday's Auto Club 500 despite an unruly car and late charge by J. Johnson

BY MIKE HARRIS

The Associated Press

FONTANA, Calif. — After testing at California Speedway in January, Greg Biffle had a feeling he would win the Auto Club 500. He did — barely.

Biffle, fighting a car that wanted to jump out from under him, somehow held on long enough to take the checkered flag Sunday in the second NASCAR Nextel Cup race of the season.

"I lost all the rear grip there with those (laps) to go," Biffle said as he celebrated his fourth career victory. "I just barely touched the wall, skinned it, two or three times there at the end and I was just able to keep it under me."

"We had the fastest car on the racetrack, but just not right there at the end."

Biffle, who won last year's season finale in November, finished the test on California's 2-mile oval with a lot of confidence.

"I had a pretty strong feeling that we would win out here," he said. "Ninety percent of the time in our sport, the fastest car doesn't win the race. Today, I feel the fastest car won."

Biffle ran strongly throughout the 250-lap race, taking the lead for good on lap 228 and building an advantage just big enough to hold off a last-ditch effort by runner-up Jimmie Johnson.

Johnson passed reigning Cup champion Kurt Busch on the last lap to take second and came up just 0.230 seconds — about six car-lengths — behind the winning Ford Taurus.

"If we just had another corner, I think there would have been a different outcome to this race," Johnson said. "Man, I saw Biffle hitting the wall and sideways a few times there at the end and I could hardly believe he got to the end. But he had a strong car and he did a really good job."

Biffle, who figured the right combination in the first test of

"I had a pretty strong feeling that we would win out here."

Ninety percent of the time in our sport, the fastest car doesn't win the race. Today, I feel the fastest car won."

Greg Biffle

Auto Club 500 winner

NASCAR's new aerodynamic rules, twice came back from as far down as 30th.

"I had to pass every car and I earned it," Biffle said. "That's why I freed the car up so much is because I was back in that traffic. Then, when I got back out front it was so dang loose that I couldn't drive it."

Roush Racing had a great day, with Biffle winning his fourth Cup race, reigning series champion Busch finishing third and taking the series lead by five points over Johnson. Carl Edwards fifth and Mark Martin seventh. Matt Kenseth also ran in the top 10 of the day, but fell off the lead lap on lap 234 with a flat tire and wound up 26th.

The key moment came on lap 218 when Busch, running second, and Biffle, in fifth, stayed on the track while leader Kevin Harvick and most of the other contenders pitted for tires during the last of seven caution periods.

Busch faked toward the pits before driving back onto the track and taking the lead, with Biffle just behind. Biffle was able to drive into the top spot seven laps

after the green flag waved for the final time.

"It wasn't a really hard decision," Biffle said about staying on the track. "We only had seven laps on those tires. Those Good-year tires they brought here are a really good compound and it takes five laps for them to come in, so we only had a two-lap advantage by pitting."

Johnson, one of those who stopped for four tires on lap 218, was 10th on the restart.

"It worked for them because the four-car guys got hung up in traffic," he said. "We should have been able to win that race."

Busch, off to a strong start after finishing second to Jeff Gordon in the Daytona 500, was disappointed with Sunday's result.

"You get so close, you just want to be able to capitalize," he said. "I ran so hard at the beginning of the last stint, I smoked my tires and Johnson got us there at the end."

Jamie McMurray finished fourth, followed by Edwards and Harvick.

This was the first race in which the four-car guys got hung up in rear spools and softer tires, an effort by NASCAR to make the racing more competitive and allow more passing by taking away downforce and putting more responsibility in the hands of the drivers.

It also was the first time the teams had to start racing with NASCAR holding the cars from the end of qualifying Saturday until Sunday morning and allowing only minor adjustments before the start.

Joe Nemechek appeared to have the strongest car for much of the race, leading a race-high 63 laps before his engine blew. Nemechek was one of five drivers using Hendrick Motorsports engines, including Gordon, who had problems during the race.

Gordon, the defending champion in this race and a three-time winner in California, was still in contention when he lost a cylinder late. He wound up 30th.

Faulkner, British Open winner in 1951, dies at 88

The Associated Press

VIRGINIA WATER, England — Former British Open champion and five-time Ryder Cup golfer Max Faulkner has died, the European PGA Tour said Monday. He was 88.

Faulkner won the British Open in 1951 and was on the British Ryder Cup team that won the title six years later.

His Open triumph at Royal Portrush broke Bobby Locke's streak of victories in golf's oldest major, but the South African regained the title in 1952 to make it three in four years.

Faulkner was the last Briton to win the Open championship until Tony Jacklin won the claret jug 18 years later.

Sports briefs

Faulkner also played in five Ryder Cups, winning only one point in a foursome in 1949.

Mooney, Immaculata co-captain, dies at 53

PHILADELPHIA — Maureen Mooney, co-captain of the Immaculata College team that won the first national women's basketball title in 1972 and repeated in 1973, has died at 53.

Mooney died Wednesday, the school said Monday.

Immaculata defeated West Chester State 52-48 in 1972 to win

the AIAW title. The Mighty Macs won three straight titles and were runners-up in 1975 and '76.

"It was the biggest Duke in the world that so many talented players wound up at Immaculata at the same time," Mooney said in a 1986 interview. "The one thing most of us had in common was that we were used to tough competition in high school in the Philadelphia Catholic League."

Mooney, of Blue Bell, Pa., was a financial consultant.

V. Williams upset in first round

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Venus Williams lost in the first round for the first time in four years, beaten by Italy's Silvia Farina Elia 7-5, 7-6 (6) in the Dubai Women's Open on Monday.

Williams' previous first-round ouster was to Barbara Schett at the 2001 French Open. She also lost her opening match at Moscow in October 2002 to Magdalena Maleeva after a first-round bye.

Farina Elia had lost all nine of her previous matches against the fifth-seeded American since 1997, but they hadn't met for almost two years.

Former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez and rising Indian star Sania Mirza — the oldest and youngest players in the draw — also reached the second round.

Martinez, 32, defeated Shinobu Asagoe of Japan 6-3, 6-4. The 18-year-old Mirza beat Jelena Kostanic of Croatia 6-7 (2), 6-4, 6-1

and will next face U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsov.

The ATP's Dubai Open ended Sunday with top-ranked Roger Federer defeating Ivan Ljubicic.

Former heavyweight champ's condition downgraded

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Former WBAI heavyweight champion Greg Page's condition has worsened slightly since being admitted to Jewish Hospital last week with pneumonia and other complications.

Page, 46, who held the WBA title for four months in 1984 before losing in his first defense, was in the intensive care in the intensive care unit on Monday, Julie Ice, spokeswoman for the hospital, said.

Smoltz in line for Opening Day start

The Associated Press

It looks as if John Smoltz is going to throw the Atlanta Braves' first pitch this season.

After spending the past three years earning 144 saves as the Braves' closer, Smoltz is returning to the starting rotation. And the way manager Bobby Cox has set his spring pitching schedule, Smoltz would be ready to go in the regular-season opener at Florida on April 5.

Smoltz, the only player who has been with the Braves for their entire run of 13 straight division titles and the 1996 Cy Young Award winner as a starter, is just glad to be starting again.

"It doesn't matter to me," Smoltz said Sunday at the Braves' camp in Kissimmee, Fla. "Whenever I make my first pitch, it's going to be an exciting time for me."

The only other pitcher who warrants consideration for the honor is Tim Hudson, a former 20-game winner who pitched on Opening Day several times from the Oakland A's.

But Hudson is a newcomer in Atlanta, coming over to the Braves in an offseason trade. He wouldn't even feel comfortable

Spring training

making the Opening-Day start instead of Smoltz.

"Even if they asked me to do it," Hudson said, "I wouldn't want to do it."

At Scottsdale, Ariz., Barry Bonds surprised his San Francisco teammates when he jumped into the batting cage to take a few swings against new closer Armando Benitez, just four weeks after knee surgery.

Bonds faced nine pitches from Benitez at the Giants' spring training stadium in only taking two swings — hard grounders to the right side of the infield.

But just being at home plate is significant progress for the 40-year-old MVP.

"Just to stand in the cage and track balls was enough for me, just to show that to my teammates," Bonds said.

With several new teammates on San Francisco's reloaded roster, Bonds seems determined to participate in as many group activities as possible leading up to Thursday's Cactus League opener. He also participated in the team's stretching exercises be-

San Francisco Giants' Barry Bonds hits from the batting cage during spring training in Scottsdale, Ariz., Sunday. Bonds faced live pitching for the first time this spring from Giants' closer Armando Benitez.



Atlanta Braves pitcher John Smoltz throws batting practice on Thursday in Kissimmee, Fla. After spending the past three seasons as a closer, Smoltz is returning to the starting rotation and could start Opening Day.

fore a light workout day for the Giants and played catch in the outfield.

"I'm one of those guys that just tries to keep himself ready for a game," Bonds said. "It's different, very different, but the good news is that my leg is coming to ground sound. The rehab is working, but I've still got a lot to do."

Benitez, who signed with the Giants as a free agent during the winter, was startled when his star teammate stepped into the cage.

He threw Bonds a few fastballs and one changeup that caused the slugger to smile.

"I didn't know he wanted to be in there," Benitez said. "He said, 'Why are you throwing me a changeup?' I said, 'Hey, man, I have to work a lot on this stuff.'"

So why is Bonds' recovery moving so quickly?

"Itch," he said with a laugh. "The itch to be part of the group. The itch to be part of your team."

At Tempe, Ariz., the Angels right-hander Kelvin Escobar, who had shoulder stiffness in January, threw off the mound for the first time and didn't experience any soreness. Manager Mike Sci-

osia said earlier in the week that Escobar likely would drop to the No. 5 spot in the rotation out of camp as a precautionary move.

At Jupiter, Fla., St. Louis Cardinals right-hander Matt Morris threw his first batting practice session since having minor shoulder surgery in December.

"Matt was very good today, facing batters for the first time," pitching coach Dave Duncan said.

Ben Sheets, another starter recovering from offseason surgery, threw batting practice at Milwaukee's spring training facility in Phoenix. Sheets had surgery to repair a herniated disk in October.

He's scheduled to start the Brewers' opener April 4 at Pittsburgh.

At Vero Beach, Fla., Brad Penny took another step in his recovery from a rare nerve injury in his right biceps, throwing his third bullpen session of the spring for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

"I felt fine," Penny said. "A little more intensity, a few more pitches — maybe 50-something."

He threw about 40 pitches Friday.

"He finished up good, he felt pretty good," manager Jim Tracy said. "He doesn't have any pain. If he had pain, he wouldn't be doing what he's doing. He wouldn't be able to do what he's doing."

Penny sustained a rare nerve injury to his right biceps Aug. 8 that sidelined him for the final two months of last season and the playoffs, except for one brief outing. He has been throwing every other day since last Wednesday and is scheduled to throw again Tuesday.

At Bradenton, Fla., Pittsburgh pitcher Oliver Perez threw off the mound for the first time since injuring his left shoulder by sleeping awkwardly on it earlier this month.

Perez threw 23 pitches, all fastballs, in a five-minute session held indoors because of heavy rain.

"I feel so happy and good," Perez said. "Everything feels normal now."

In Dunedin, Fla., Blue Jays manager John Gibbons said Cy Young Award winner Roy Halladay will make the first start of the season for Toronto, against Tampa Bay April 4.

3.2 Ghz
DVR 1024MB Ram
 ATI 9600/128mb turbo
 Wireless
\$175
 per month
800HighTech.com

Matsui not expecting extension soon

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Yankees left fielder Hideki Matsui doesn't expect talks on his possible contract extension to be completed during spring training.

Arm Tellem, Matsui's agent, and Yankees general manager Brian Cashman started negotiations Saturday.

Matsui is due \$8 million in 2005, the final season of a \$21 million, three-year deal. He has a clause in his contract that requires the Yankees to put him on waivers unless a new contract is agreed to by Nov. 15.

"Probably not going to be anything that's going to happen prior to the beginning of the season," Matsui said Sunday. "My original plan was to play through my three years and then decide where to go from there. That was my original plan when I came here, and that still is."

The 30-year-old outfielder was a three-time MVP in Japan's Central League before joining the Yankees in 2003. He hit .298 with 31 homers and 108 RBIs last season after batting .287 with 16 homers and 106 RBIs in his first season in New York.

Toms takes drama out of Match Play final

DiMarco dominated as compatriot rolls to easy 6-and-5 win

BY BERNIE WILSON

The Associated Press

CARLSBAD, Calif. — The only drama during the last day of the Match Play Championship was in the consolation match.

There certainly wasn't any in the championship round. Not the way David Toms wrapped up an incredible run at La Costa on Sunday.

Toms had Chris DiMarco whipped even before lunchtime.

Toms got so far ahead at one point that they almost didn't have to make the turn onto the back nine of the 36-hole final. His mind began wandering toward what he would say at the trophy presentation, and he actually whacked himself on the head to stop the idle thoughts.

When he sank an 8-foot birdie on the 13th hole, he wrapped up a 6-and-5 victory that earned him \$1.3 million. It was his 11th career PGA Tour victory, and first World Golf Championship title.

"It just felt easy at times for me, I guess," Toms said. "Not easy to beat my opponent, but the golf in front of me, as far as the shots and everything. I really felt comfortable."

Toms won a tournament that lacked a weekend buzz after top seeds Vijay Singh, Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson were eliminated Friday.

The highest-seeded player still left playing on the weekend was Retief Goosen, who lost his semifinal match Saturday to DiMarco, but came back Sunday and beat Ian Poulter in 20 holes in the consolation match.



David Toms follows the flight of his tee shot on the par three 12th hole during his championship match against Chris DiMarco at the World Match Play Championship on Sunday.

Toms merely delivered the most dominant performance in the seven-year history of this fickle tournament, winning eight of nine holes to put away DiMarco before lunch, then pouring it on at the afternoon.

Toms was 9 up at one point and had a chance to end the match on the 17th hole. Tournament officials trailed Toms over the final four holes with the Walter Hagen Trophy and a podium in the cart, waiting to set up the trophy presentation when the dribbling was over.

"That's the worst beating I've taken for sure," DiMarco said.

DiMarco played some of his best golf when it no longer mattered.

He saved par from thick rough behind the ninth green, then made three straight birdies.

Toms said he couldn't think of a turning point in his final match.

"This whole round is kind of a blur," he said.

His record in the Accenture Match Play Championship improved to 18-5, second only to the 21-4 mark by two-time defending champion Tiger Woods.

It was his 11th career victory on the PGA Tour and moved Toms up to No. 9 in the world ranking.

"I've won a few tournaments along the way, but I never felt this at ease on the golf course," Toms said. "Not that it was easy. I just felt I could hit the shot no matter what it was. I have no idea how to explain it."

Toms lost to Woods, 2 and 1, in the final match two years ago when he fell four holes down in the morning round and fought just to extend the match to 35th hole.

He never gave DiMarco any hope.

DiMarco still looked as though he was in a state of shock when Toms ended the match.

"They got a good champion," said DiMarco, whose \$750,000 runner-up check was the largest of his career.

The match was even through nine holes until Toms went on another tear, making birdie on five of the next six holes to take a 6-up lead after the morning round, the largest ever.

By then, the sparse gallery at La Costa knew this was over. At times, it looked as though DiMarco knew, too.

After winning on the 18th hole in the first two rounds, Toms simply had no match the rest of the week — not Mickelson, not Scott, not anyone.

He was awesome against Poulter in the semifinal, going birdie-eagle-eagle to seize control and hitting every approach over his final eight holes to within 12 feet.

DiMarco saw highlights Saturday night, then saw firsthand just how good Toms was playing.

"I think those are probably two of the best back-to-back rounds you can see," DiMarco said.

Toms felt exactly how Woods has during some of his big wins.

"When Tiger played his best golf and the way he made birdies and dominated fields and made it look easy at times, I guess maybe that's what it feels like," Toms said. "I could certainly get used to that."

Australia's Ogilvy picks up first PGA Tour victory

The Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — Returning to the course where he made his PGA Tour debut, Geoff Ogilvy and the Chrysler Classic of Tucson combined for another first.

Ogilvy won his first title in 108 tour starts Sunday, becoming the event's fifth first-time champion in six years by beating Kevin Na on the second hole of a playoff at Tucson National.

"It feels like I've been waiting quite a while, so it is special," said Ogilvy, who started his tour career in Tucson in 2001 and finished third.

The 27-year-old Australian rolled in an 18-foot, downhill putt for birdie on the second playoff to beat Na. Ogilvy shouted for joy after making the difficult putt, and embraced his wife Juli on the green after Na missed an 8-footer that would have extended the playoff.

"I have never really got too revved up on a golf course," said Ogilvy, who had four top-10 finishes last year. "Well, I have, but I try to stay on kind of the same plane all day, you know? That's kind of my goal."

Ogilvy's \$540,000 winner's

Golf roundup

share was about 12 times more than his earnings 32 years ago (\$47,316) after making the cut in two of four tournaments.

But Ogilvy, who has been among the top 95 money-winners all four years on tour, is practically a veteran compared to the 21-year-old Na, the youngest player on the circuit.

He and Na fared better in their first playoff experience than veteran Mark Calvacchia.

Calvacchia, who has won 11 titles, was 15 under after 36 holes and closed with a 3-under 69 to tie Na and Ogilvy (71) at 19-under 269 and get into the playoff. But he double-bogeyed the first extra hole after needing two shots to blast out of a bunker.

"To hit it there?" Calvacchia said. "I guarantee you that one guy, the entire weekend — maybe in the whole tournament — hit in the back of that trap in the course of four days, and I have to go to do it in the playoff. Incredibly!"

The 72-hole total of 19 under was modest for a tournament in which the cut was 5 under, lowest on the PGA Tour this year. The 7109-yard Tucson National course toughened up Sunday under bright sunshine, with firmer greens and tougher driving because of occasional wind.

Steve Stricker closed with a 68, but missed the playoff by a shot. Doug Barron finished fifth after a closing 72 for a 271 total.

Aaron Baddeley (68), runner-up to Heath Slocum last year, Billy Mayfair (70) and Brent Geiberger (71) tied at 272.

Na was still choking back tears while meeting with reporters, recalling his disappointment at failing to win for the second time in three weeks.

He made a valiant bid, sinking a 28-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole, the most difficult on the course, to finish with a 71, and making a 20-footer for par on No. 18 to keep pace with Ogilvy on the first playoff hole.

"I want to become a player like Sergio Garcia," Na said. "You know, winning at 20, 21, guys like Phil (Mickelson), who beat him in Phoenix. I want to be the first —

you know, one of the best in the world. And I feel like I can do that."

"And to lose in a playoff like that after hanging in there on the first hole, it's pretty depressing."

On the second playoff hole, the 501-yard, par-5 10th, Na and Ogilvy drove through the fairway and behind trees. Ogilvy punched his second shot into the fairway for a clear approach that stopped 18 feet above the hole.

Na cleared the trees with his second shot, and the ball landed just beyond the fringe at the back of the green. He chipped 8 feet past, giving Ogilvy the opening he needed for a dramatic ending.

"It was hole it or go home, in my head," Ogilvy said. "I found a way to hit a good putt."

Weather delays Outlook Steakhouse Pro-Am again

LUTZ, Fla. — Hale Irwin summed up in three words the frustration of taking three days to play a little more than a round of golf.

"It's a mess," the Champions Tour career victory leader said Sunday after bad weather interrupted play again in the rain-shortened Outlook Steakhouse Pro-Am.

The scheduled 54-hole event was reduced to 36 on Saturday, but more than an inch of new rain left puddles on the greens and tees and pushed back completion of the senior event until Monday.

Play at the TPC of Tampa Bay was halted after a little more than an hour.

"I think everybody starts off balance. I don't think there's any way you can go out there with any certainty knowing you're going to play one hole or nine holes," Irwin said. "I think the certainty was we weren't going to play the entire day."

When play resumes Monday, Irwin will have 12 holes to play and Morris and Hataksky's 7-under 135 will be the score to beat.

Hataksky was one of 22 golfers to finish the second round Sunday. Two of the 76 pros didn't even begin round two until Sunday morning, and 30 remained on the course when play was suspended for the day.

Eighteen players completed the round in the 68 minutes the field played Sunday. Six others withdrew. Mike Hill, J.C. Stead, Lanny Wadkins, Dave Stockton, Jim Colbert and Raymond Floyd.

Williams, Claret try to put themselves in the running

NFL combine focus shifts to 40 times

By BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Mike Williams ran. Matt Jones ran fast. Jerome Mathis ran very fast. Maurice Claret ran, but looked as though he was walking. Oh, what 120 feet can do for a football career.

The NFL combine is all about interviews, physicals and drills. But the focal point always is the 40-yard dash that many — but hardly all — prospects run.

During the weekend, Williams, who originally said he would pass on the 40, changed his mind and ran a pair of 4.59s. Not great for a wide receiver, but at least Williams put himself on the line and produced a time, something several other wideouts didn't. Including the top player at the position, Michigan's Braylon Edwards.

But many did perform — and perform well.

"It was good to see Mike out there running," Tennessee coach Jeff Fisher said of the Southern Cal receiver who sat out last season in the fallout from Claret's failed legal challenge to the draft. "It's great for the clubs to see so many guys running."

Williams wants to play wide receiver in the pros, although some teams believe he could be a tight end or H-back. Two definite wideouts, Miami's Roscoe Parrish and Oklahoma's Mark Clayton, ran swift 4.43s.

"Clayton earned himself a lot of money by doing that," NFL draft expert Gil Brandt said.

Mathis, who played at Hampton in Virginia, was the fastest wideout at 4.32. Brandt and Cowboys coach Bill Parcells caught him in an incredible 4.25, which

would have broken the best registered combine time of 4.28 by Deion Sanders.

That time could shoot Mathis' value way up. A small college All-American, Mathis certainly improved his stock. He already had a big Gridiron Classic, scoring on a 26-yard reception and a 38-yard run off a reverse. Mathis had 108 yards of total offense in that game.

Jones has become an intriguing prospect. A quarterback at Arkansas, where he also played basketball, his 4.41 time was the fastest ever by a quarterback at the combine.

"Very impressive," Fisher said. Jones is looked at as a wideout or an H-back by many pro teams.

He apparently has very good hands, too.

Of the true QBs, former Florida State player Adrian McPherson ran a 4.72 before he tweaked his quadriceps. That was the quickest at the position.

Courtney Roby of Indiana sped to a 4.36 to trail Mathis among wideouts.

All of them would have left Claret in the dust. The former Ohio State sensation — for one year at least — badly set back his cause with slow 40s. His best was in the 4.75 range, with no official time released because he wasn't in the top five in his running backs group.

While fellow running backs J.J. Arrington and Ronnie Brown were running very quickly, impressing scouts and personnel directors, Claret botched his opportunity.

"It was a rough one," Claret told NFL Network. "I've been working so long to get to this day,

doing better at practice, and I kind of mess it up. I'm frustrated. I've been working a long time, waking up at 5:30 and going back at 12:30 and then at 7 o'clock, and I totally busted."

He certainly didn't make any teams think about drafting him in a big-money slot. Instead, he claimed he ached the interview sessions with the teams, then bungled the physical stuff.

"A lot of coaches said I was a lot more humble and approachable," he said. "I thought they'd ask a lot more about what happened in the past."

Such a challenging league's draft rules in court, winning early, then seeing an appellate court overturn the decision, making him ineligible for the 2004 selections after he missed the '03 season under Ohio State suspension.

Or pleading guilty to lying on a police report after claiming \$10,000 in merchandise was stolen from his car.

Or accepting benefits in college to which he was not entitled. Or accusing Ohio State of arranging for a no-work job and providing improper academic aid.

Or showing up unprepared for last year's combine.

Or not playing football in '04, either.

Those things are on his résumé, however. So is his spotty workout Saturday in which he skipped several drills after his slow run.

"I think we were all as disappointed in his time as he was," Titans general manager Floyd Reese said. "It looks like he's in better shape than last year. It wasn't quite what he hoped when he ran 40s. And it doesn't help when guys around him run 4.4s."

Including a quarterback.



Former Ohio State running back Maurice Claret runs the 40-yard dash during the NFL combine in Indianapolis on Saturday. His slow times set back his attempt to show teams two years off didn't hurt his game.

QB Griese will restructure contract, return to Tampa

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Brian Griese agreed to restructure his contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Sunday, helping the team alleviate its salary-cap problems.

The Tampa Tribune and St. Petersburg Times reported the quarterback's deal is worth \$32 million for five years.

"There is a long-term agreement, and it will be signed in the next few days," team spokesman Jeff Kamis said.

Griese earned \$900,000 last season, when he took over for Chris Simms after the second-year quarterback was injured during his first pro start. Simms had replaced Brad Johnson after the Bucs lost their first four games.

Griese started 10 games and completed an NFL-best 69.3 percent of his passes for 2,632 yards, 20 touchdowns and 12 interceptions.

He also had a propensity for making game-altering mistakes, including four interceptions that were returned for TDs.

But the former Denver starter was in jeopardy of not returning because he was due a \$6 million roster bonus on Wednes-

NFL briefs

day. Redoing his contract will save the team more than \$4 million under the salary cap.

It also means Johnson, who helped the Bucs win the Super Bowl two years ago, could be released this week to create another \$4.5 million in cap space. General Manager Bruce Allen has said the team is all set for \$17 million over.

Although coach Jon Gruden has said there will be open competition for the starting job in training camp, the financial commitment to Griese would seem to give him the edge over Simms, who's still regarded the club's quarterback of the future.

Lions re-sign center Raiola

DETROIT — The Detroit Lions and Dominic Raiola agreed on a five-year contract, keeping the team's center off the free-agent market.

Raiola started every game the past three seasons after spending much of his rookie season in 2001 on special teams. The 26-year-old Honolulu native was drafted in the second round out of Nebraska.

The Lions also are looking at signing a veteran quarterback to back up starter Jeff Harrington. They have interviewed Jeff Garcia and put him through physical tests at the NFL combine in Indianapolis.

Garcia was released by the Cleveland Browns Feb. 22. He completed 144 of 253 passes for 1,731 yards with 10 touchdowns and nine interceptions in 10 starts last season.

"We'll just have to wait and see because it has to be the right fit on the field with our situation and it has to be the right fit cap-wise," Millen said.

Garcia earned his second straight Pro Bowl selection in 2001 with San Francisco under Steve Mariucci, then the 49ers' coach and now the Lions' coach. He completed 62.7 percent of his passes and accumulated 3,538 yards and 32 touchdowns that year.

Kurt Warner, who played for the New York Giants last season, also will be available and could be considered by Detroit.

Bettis agrees to return to Steelers

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers aren't ready to park the Bus just yet.

Jerome Bettis, who weighed retiring after the Steelers lost in the AFC championship game last month, agreed Saturday to another pay cut and will play for at least one more season.

This is the second consecutive season the NFL's No. 5 career rusher has accepted a substantial pay cut to stay in Pittsburgh.

Bettis was to have made \$4,484,000 next season, but will play for about \$1.5 million — or about \$300,000 more than his base salary last season.

After the Steelers signed Duce Staley a year ago, Bettis agreed to cut his salary by \$2.7 million to remain in Pittsburgh as a backup. Bettis went on to enjoy a comeback season as the Steelers went 16-2, gaining at least 100 yards in all but one of seven starts while making the Pro Bowl for the sixth time after rushing for 941 yards.

"We're re-evaluated the deal worked out," Lamont Smith, one of Bettis' agents, said Saturday night of a signing first reported on the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's Web site. "We anticipate the Steelers will make another run at the Super Bowl and that is Jerome's motivation to come back, to play in the Super Bowl."

Carolina hangs on vs. Terps

Last-second block by May saves Heels

The Associated Press

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — If North Carolina can win the Tar Heels without Rashad McCants, just how good will the Tar Heels be when their leading scorer returns? The rest of the Atlantic Coast Conference can't be too eager to find out.

Raymond Felton made the tie-breaking layup with 19 seconds left and Sean May blocked a shot just before the buzzer, giving the second-ranked Tar Heels a harrowing 85-83 victory on Sunday.

May had 22 points and 11 rebounds for North Carolina, which remained alone atop the ACC after its fifth straight victory.

It was the 21st consecutive game in which the Tar Heels (24-3, 12-2) had at least four players score in double figures, and they did it without McCants, who has been sidelined with an intestinal disorder. He was averaging 15.8 points and ranked second on the team in assists.

"It's still difficult to play without Rashad, but we've done it for two games and if we have to, we'll do it for more," North Carolina coach Roy Williams said.

Jawad Williams had 21 points, David Noel scored a season-high 12 points and Felton had 10 points and 10 assists.

"It just shows that guys are willing to step up," May said.

With the score tied at 83, Felton



Wake Forest's Justin Gray, top left, and Virginia's Devin Smith wrestle for control of a loose ball during the first half of Sunday's game at Winston-Salem, N.C. Wake Forest's Chris Paul is sprawled beneath the two scrambling players. Sixth-ranked Wake Forest beat Virginia 90-68.

drove the left side of the lane and delivered his only basket of the second half. Mike Jones had a chance to tie it for Maryland, but his last-second shot was swatted away by May.

"Sean is unbelievable. He does great things at the right time," Felton said. "That time, he made a big play on the defensive end. My opinion is that is what won the game, not my layup."

In the first game between the teams, the Tar Heels hammered the Terrapins by 34 points at Chapel Hill. This one was closer, but North Carolina again proved too talented and too deep for a Maryland squad with one scholarship senior.

"They're the No. 2 team in the country and I want our guys to believe they can play with them," Maryland coach Gary Williams said. "On the last play, we had

good isolation with Mike Jones. But Sean made a great play."

The loss means Maryland (16-10, 7-8) must beat Virginia Tech on the road Saturday to finish at .500 in the ACC.

"The last game of the season is going to be a dogfight, especially going down to Virginia Tech for their senior night," Jones said.

"We need to go down there and play as hard as we can." The Tar Heels led 76-68 with five minutes left, but the Terrapins used three straight three-pointers to go up 81-80 with 1:33 to go.

Jawad Williams hit a three-pointer for North Carolina and Ekene Ibekwe tied it at 83 on a tip-in with 41 seconds remaining.

That set the stage for a thrilling finish.

"Jones came over and got a

clean look," May said. "I knew he had to put the shot up, he didn't have time enough to pass it. I was able to get a clean block."

Chris McCray scored a career-high 25 points, Nik Caner-Medley had 16 and John Chavis added 13 for the Terrapins, who rallied from a 10-point deficit to tie it.

The Tar Heels finished with a 44-35 edge on the boards.

"It's about as athletic as a small elephant," Roy Williams said jokingly.

No. 6 Wake Forest 90, Virginia 68: Justin Gray scored 20 points and Chris Paul and Eric Williams each had 17 points for the Demon Deacons (24-4, 11-3 Atlantic Coast Conference), who improved to 15-0 at home.

Devin Smith scored 22 points for Virginia (13-12, 4-10) and J.R.

Reynolds and T.J. Bannister each had 15.

No. 20 Wisconsin 64, Ohio St. 56: Alando Tucker scored 19 points for the visiting Badgers (18-7, 9-5 Big Ten), who were 8-for-15 from three-point range while holding Ohio State to 5-for-22 shooting from behind the arc.

Terence Dials had 20 points for Ohio State (18-10, 7-7), which lost its second straight after winning six of seven.

No. 23 Villanova 67, Georgetown 56: Allan Ray scored 18 points and Will Sheridan had a season-high 14 points and grabbed nine rebounds for the Wildcats (9-6, 9-5 Big East), who won their fifth straight.

Brandon Bowman had 22 points for the Hoyas (16-9, 8-6), who have lost three straight.

Hoosiers had the Wright idea vs. Michigan State

By STEVE HERMAN

The Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — BRACEY Wright knew exactly what was at stake for Indiana against Michigan State.

"The bottom line was, if we didn't win today, we would have to win at Wisconsin," Wright said. "We're also protecting our home court. We felt it would be the biggest win and give us the most momentum."

Wright, who had three games and was ineffective in his first game back two weeks ago, scored a season-high 32 points Sunday to lead Indiana to a 78-74 overtime victory over No. 10 Michigan State.

Wright, who had three games and was ineffective in his first game back two weeks ago, scored a season-high 32 points Sunday to lead Indiana to a 78-74 overtime victory over No. 10 Michigan State.

"That first shot I got, I had a little space, so I was able to knock that down," Wright said. "I saw that if I could get going, that

would get everybody else going. Once I got my rhythm and started knocking down shots, everybody else did, too."

D.J. White added 17 points, including the tying basket in the closing seconds of regulation and the go-ahead basket in overtime, and Marshall Strickland had 13 points and eight assists for Indiana, which plays at No. 20 Wisconsin on Tuesday and finish the season at home next week against Northwestern.

White, playing in foul trouble most of the game, scored with 17 seconds left, sending the game into overtime tied at 64. Paul Davis put Michigan State ahead for the last time at 66-64, but he fouled out shortly thereafter and the Hoosiers ran off eight straight points.

"The shot was going to either me or Bracey and I guess I popped open," White said of the tying basket in regulation. "I just felt good when I let it go. I knew it was going to go in. I just did my job and put it in the basket."

In overtime, Roderick Wilmont hit one

free throw, White had two more baskets and Wright put the game out of reach with a three-pointer with 42 seconds left. The Hoosiers scored their last six points on free throws over the final 26 seconds and took a 78-72 lead before Chris Hill scored at the buzzer for Michigan State (20-5, 11-3).

"We didn't deserve to win it," Hill said. "It wasn't just one guy. A number of guys missed shots, missed opportunities. We fought back and put ourselves in a good position the last couple of minutes but didn't make the plays."

Hill, Davis and Alan Anderson scored 12 points apiece for Michigan State, which had won six straight.

"For the most part, we've won as a team. Today, we really, truly lost as a team," Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said. "There was one guy that played anywhere close to where I hoped he would play, and that was Kelvin Torbert."

The Spartans rallied by 11 late in the first half but pulled within three at half-

time and took the lead midway through the second half on a three-pointer by Torbert. The Spartans built the lead to six points before Indiana's final push.

"We just had some mistakes, whether it be dribbling it off our feet or whether it be not following the game plan or not switching when we were supposed to," Izzo said. "We just made a lot of mistakes against a team that after the first five minutes came back and punched us square in the nose."

After Indiana's early lead, the Hoosiers went more than four minutes without a field goal but stayed close at the free-throw line and trailed only 60-58 after a three-pointer by A.J. Ratliff with four minutes to go. Maurice Ager then hit one free throw and a three-pointer to put Michigan State ahead 64-58, matching its biggest lead of the game.

Strickland scored for Indiana and Wright pulled the Hoosiers within two with two free throws with 1:30 remaining. After a Michigan State turnover, the Hoosiers got the ball inside to White, a 6-foot-9 freshman, who tied the game. A last-second miss by Torbert sent the game to overtime.

SPORTS



Walker helps 'sub-par' Celtics
become first East team
to win in Phoenix, Page 28



Kansas forward Wayne Simien (23) breaks through the defense of Oklahoma State's Ivan McFarlin (23) Stephen Graham (21) and Terrance Crawford (42) for two of his 32 points.

Jayhawks win a barnburner

Kansas slides past Oklahoma St. in a classic to end three-game skid

By DOUG TUCKER
The Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Play this one in the Final Four and it's an instant classic, a game that lives forever.

Instead, it will go down in the memories of everyone who coached, played or witnessed it as one of the greatest college basketball games they ever experienced.

That No. 8 Kansas finally emerged with an 81-79 victory over No. 4 Oklahoma State on Sunday seemed almost an afterthought. With the Big 12 championship on the line, as well as a high NCAA seed, the old rivals combined to shoot 62 percent from the floor and played almost flawlessly in key stretches throughout the afternoon.

Kansas forward Wayne Simien, a leading candidate for Big 12 player of the year, had perhaps his greatest game. He scored a career-best 32 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and broke the school record by making 34 free throws in a row.

Oklahoma State's John Lucas, last season's Big 12 player of the year, made his first nine shots, including four three-pointers.

There was a time in the second half when Kansas was shooting 70 percent but still trailed by a point after Oklahoma State hit two buckets within 21 seconds.

"This was a great ballgame," Lucas said. "One of the best ballgames all year."

Kansas shot 66 percent from the field, and Oklahoma State hit 59 percent.

Aaron Miles hit a running layup with 37 seconds to go for the Jayhawks (21-4, 11-3), who have a one-game lead over Oklahoma State (20-5, 10-4) and No. 22 Oklahoma with two games to play.

"Certainly, for me, it was an honor to coach in this game," Kansas' Bill Self said. "This will go down as one of the great ones to ever be played in this building."

The loss for Oklahoma State probably means coach Eddie Sutton will end his career without ever leading the Cowboys to victory in Allen Fieldhouse. But the fact his Cowboys are 0-11 here hardly seemed to bother the man with 775 career wins.

"What a great college basketball game," Sutton said. "When both teams play like that, it is a shame that one has to lose. If we both played like that, we would beat a lot of people. This was a good game even though we lost. It was still a great game for us."

Lucas' first miss came with 1:31 to go and the game tied at 78.

With 37 seconds left, Miles, the Big 12 assists leader, scored the go-ahead basket for an 80-78 lead.

Oklahoma State freshman James On Curry was fouled by Moody and went to the line with 25 seconds left. He made the second free throw to make it a one-point game. Miles was fouled with 19 seconds to go and he hit the second for the 81-79 lead.

After dribbling between the circle for a few seconds, Lucas launched a three-point attempt that hit the rim.

"When I left his hand, it was like it was in slow motion," Simien said. "I thought he was going to make it. He seemed like he couldn't miss all day long."

Lucas had 22 points while Joey Graham added 19 and Curry 15.

Keith Langford had 14 points and Miles added 13 for Kansas.

After last Monday's loss at Oklahoma, the Kansas players declared themselves off-limits to the media, and Self confiscated all their cell phones.

"I don't know if that helped them at all," Self said. "But if they think it did."

Graham agreed the high shooting percentages were a result of good offense, not bad defense.

"We both played our tails off," he said. "We played a great game and fought till the end. We were really going at it."

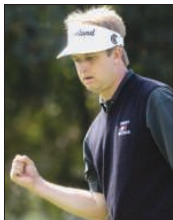
Biffle holds onto jumpy car long enough to hold off Johnson, win NASCAR's Auto Club 500

Page 30



Dominant Toms has no equal in Match Play, tops DiMarco 6-and-5 in final

Page 32



40 times dash to the fore as combine winds down

Page 33

